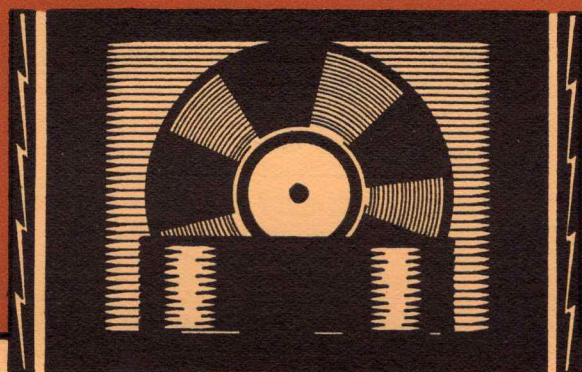


*The*  
**AMERICAN  
MUSIC LOVER**

MARCH, 1937

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EDITED BY PETER HUGH REED



# RECORD BUYER'S GUIDE OF THE NATION'S MOST RELIABLE DEALERS

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# The American Music Lover

A MUSICAL CONNOISSEUR'S MAGAZINE

## MARCH

Volume II, No. 11

## 1937

### EDITORIAL

**I**LLNESS has delayed activities in *The Friends of Recorded Music*. Disc 7, owing to copyright difficulties as well as illness of the artist, will have to be postponed indefinitely.

There will be a series of recordings made by the *Society* during the month of March, but announcement of these will be held up until we have the records on hand, so that we will not have to disappoint our members as we were unfortunately forced to do this past month. May we take this opportunity to thank those interested in the *Society's* activities for their interest and patience. We shall not have to beg for indulgence again.

Discs 5 and 6 are ready for distribution, and by this time many of the subscribers have received them. We are greatly pleased to be able to present two aspects of the late Griffes' music through the courtesy and cooperation of G. Schirmer, Inc., the publishers.

\* \* \* \*

Interest in old recordings seems to be spreading. Two stores have put in special departments to take care of those of their customers who desire old recordings. In Philadelphia, the progressive H. Royer Smith & Co. has set aside a section of the store which is called *The Record Collector's Corner*. We are greatly flattered to have the title of our collector's department thus carried on. In New York, the Vesey Music Shop has a special series of shelves put aside for records of famous artists of the past, and the store also issues a brochure called the *Golden Age of Opera*. This shop has on hand an unusual representation of Battistini's recordings.

(Continued on Page 377)

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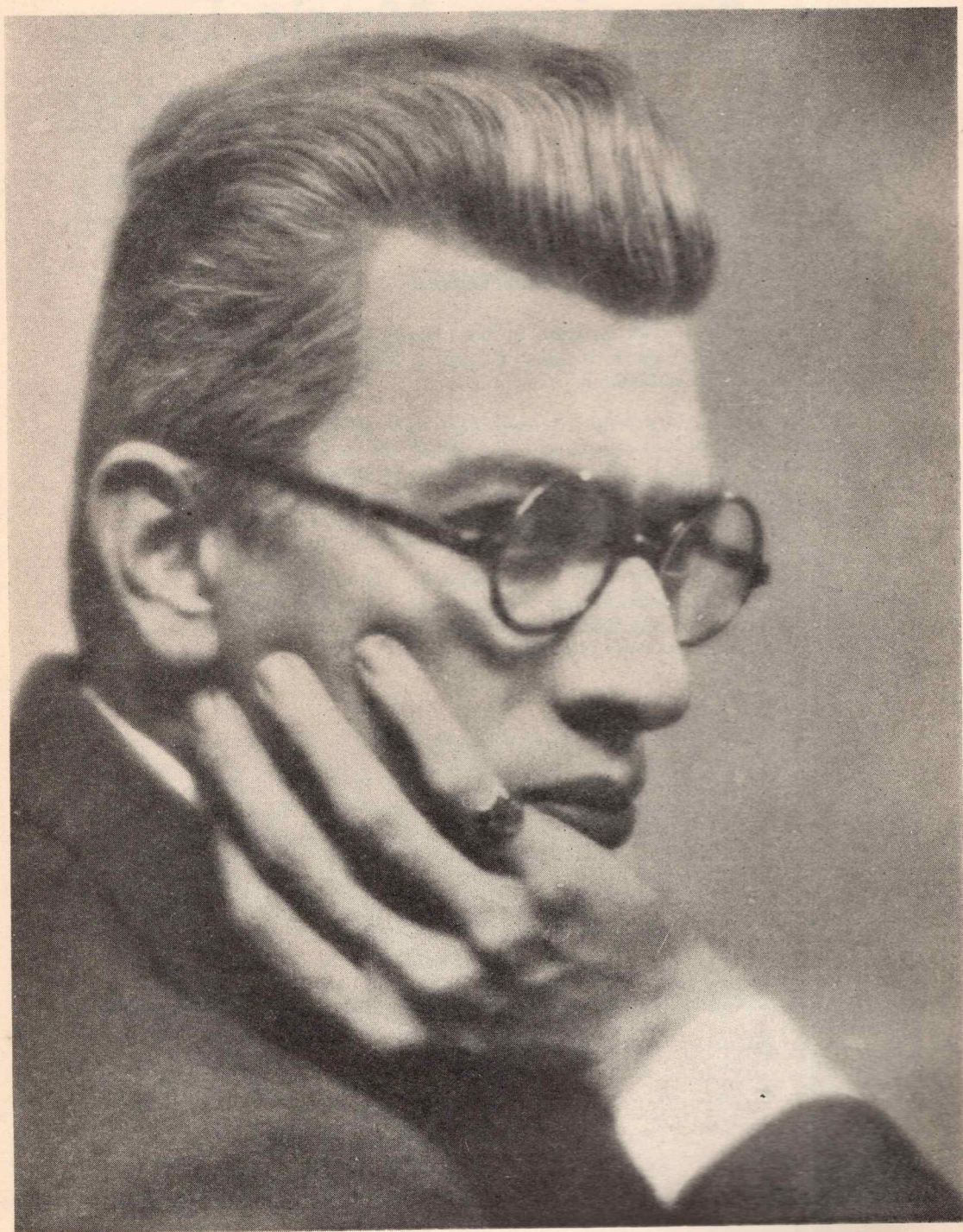
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FRANK BLACK . . . . .

A new RCA-Victor Red Seal Artist



# Toscanini and Frank Black

## To Form Major Links Between Radio and Records

By PETER HUGH REED

**T**OSCANINI'S acceptance of the invitation of the president of the Radio corporation of America, David Sarnoff, to return next year and broadcast a series of symphonic concerts with the National Broadcasting Company Symphony Orchestra over its nationwide networks is cheering news not only to radio listeners but also to phonophiles. For this association with the great Italian Maestro opens up wider and more extensive possibilities for recordings of his incomparable performances. There has never been any marked degree of affiliation between radio and records, and despite the fact that the NBC and the RCA-Victor are close cousins, very little of the former's better broadcasts have been perpetuated on the latter's records. This is understandable more than in part, for it cannot be honestly said that radio has always sponsored the best rehearsed performances. All too frequently radio programs of the best are put together too carelessly and too ineffectually for the good of everyone and everything concerned. The General Motors concerts of the past year, I would say, among others, are flagrant examples of this. Recordings of much that was done on these programs, for example, would hardly be of any great value. Where a recorded performance is concerned, too much care can not be exerted to procure the best; for the permanency of the record and its lasting influence are of too great importance to be ignored. Not that recorded performances have not been guilty of some faults comparable to those of radio; an implication like that would be a gross misrepresentation.

The first link to be formed between radio and records occurred this past month when RCA-Victor signed up Frank Black and the NBC String Symphony for a series of red seal releases. Mr. Black, one of the foremost conductors in radio, has contributed a great deal to furtherance of good music over the air. His performances with the NBC String Sym-

phony have been outlined and discussed in these pages before. Correspondence endorsing his work with this organization has been extensive and most laudatory; for Frank Black has kept his String Symphony programs on a high level and has gone to considerable effort to make his programs both unusual and distinctive. The growth of the National Broadcasting Symphony Orchestra can be traced to Frank Black's efforts and good judgment, and although we can safely predict that many changes and additions will be made in that organization, since Mr. Sarnoff has given Maestro Toscanini a free hand in this matter, we believe the greater part of the orchestra will remain the same as has been heard under the brilliant and incisive direction of Mr. Black.

Black is an old hand at record making, having been the General Music Director of the original Brunswick company. He knows the problems of recording, the acoustical qualities essential to good production and the desirable manner to arrange his orchestra for the best results.

The need for outstanding recordings from a chamber orchestra of the NBC String Symphony's calibre cannot be reflected. The neglect of this type of music on records has been unaccountable, for music of this variety is the ideal connecting link between symphonic and chamber music. In the past two years, the main rival companies have each pursued a separate policy — the one heavily endorsing symphony recordings, the other placing an equally forceful implication on chamber music output. Since both companies have given us much to appreciate, criticism is not implied, but this observation could hardly be avoided in passing.

Any new recordings by Signor Toscanini could not materialize, of course, until about

(Continued on Page 374)



# Charles Tomlinson Griffes\*

1884--1920

By JOHN TASKER HOWARD

CHARLES T. GRIFFES was one of those prophets who, in their quasi-mystic fashion, seek to tell us of the music of tomorrow; who know that art is not stagnant, and who experiment for us in new fields of expression, ever striving for new combinations of tones and colors which will adequately mirror our modern way of living and our modern way of thinking. Just as the age of machinery and reorganized industry is demanding a new social structure, so is the advanced thought of the twentieth century demanding a revolutionized art, an art which will faithfully interpret the highly strung temperament of the period.

The actual music that Griffes left behind him, beautiful though it be, is not his greatest gift to art. Nor is the music of any composer of originality his real contribution. Griffes' greatness lay in his courage to think, to seek, and to write what he thought and what he found. It is such as he, great or small, who make for the advancement of art and of science.

When Griffes wrote his music he also penned his autobiography, both narrative and descriptive of his nature and his thought. From his early songs we learn that he studied in Germany. When he was no longer under the influence of his instructors he stopped to think over his problems for himself. Five years elapsed, and a new Griffes emerged, a Griffes retaining all the charm of his youth, but possessed of a more finely sharpened pencil, a more individual note, and a better developed equipment for expressing the poetry of his imaginative self.

The new Griffes asked us to share with him the sounds of nature; the lapping of the lake, the rush of the night wind, the spray of the fountain, the sea, the forest, the clouds. All these were minstrels to his ears, and he made them so to us.

## II

Of Griffes' sincerity there can be no question. Opinions may vary as to the "beauty"

(in the traditional sense) of his more modern style, but none can say that he was not in earnest. Griffes was no mere *poseur* trading on the assumption that what the public does not understand it thinks original. He sought a new idiom, and he held to his search relentlessly. He was an explorer and as such deserves our gratitude.

In all that he wrote Griffes was logical and consistent. By this I do not mean that he confined himself to harmonic laws of his own or some one else's making. Far from it; I doubt if even he himself subjected his own harmonies to analysis in the familiar sense of the word; but in all his music we can find design and symmetry, and an observance of form.

In a somewhat remote sense the later Griffes is akin to the later Schönberg. It has been remarked that musicians of the future will find themselves better equipped because of Schönberg's explorations. Griffes has taken what he evidently learned from Schönberg, and more particularly from Stravinsky, and utilized the lesson learned in his own way, and for his own purposes. The early songs of Griffes possessed the sleepy warmth of the German *Lied*, a feeling of Romanticism which never left him, even when he became a modernist. Add to this spirit a leaning towards mysticism and something of the realism and nervousness of twentieth-century art, combine with them a modernist's conception of the musical value of dissonance, and the result is the Griffes *Sonata* for piano, and some of the later songs.

The sincerity of Griffes is further proved by the fact that he made a real sacrifice by adhering so closely to his ideals. Surely, had he chosen to do so, the composer of such delightful songs as *Let's to the Woods to Gather May*, and *An Old Song Re-Sung*, could have written "melodious" songs, with an appeal to the many. Griffes was a true melodist when he wished to be, and many melodies of his pen have the force of in-

\*Revised and reprinted from a pamphlet published by G. Schirmer, Inc., and now out of print.



evitability. To please the many was not the task this young American had set for himself. His self-appointed mission was to satisfy *himself*, and that self was a severe critic: witness the comparatively small number of published compositions.

Like Debussy, whom he admired almost as much as he admired Ravel, Griffes was more interested in tints than in solid colors. Much of his music has the delicacy of the art that is French. At times, for instance, the modern French master seems to have been more concerned with individual chords than with their progressions. In the same spirit Griffes has occasionally given us harmonies that are exquisite in themselves, dependent on nothing that goes before or that follows. Modes and Oriental scales seem to have held a fascination for him.

Of Griffes' technique there is little to say. Technical facility he had in abundance, but one does not think first of technique in considering works of this character. It is at times apparent especially in the early part of his career, that the composer is perhaps a little too conscious of the means he is using to gain his end; but in his later years, as he acquired a greater dexterity in employing the tools with which he worked, we feel that he has come to a point where he can say what he thinks without consulting his grammar and his dictionary.

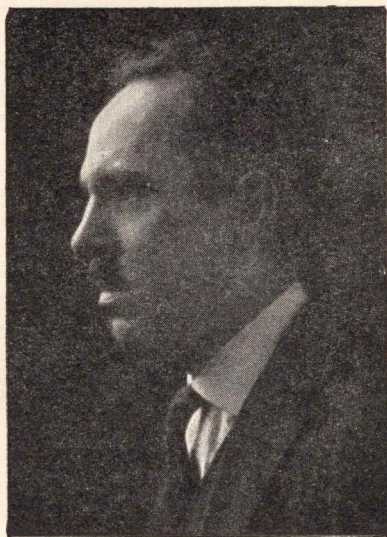
Of Griffes' many gifts, the power of description seems preëminent; hence the exquisiteness of such tone pictures as *The Lake at Evening*, the vividness with which the pomp, vanity and beauty of *The White Peacock* are portrayed, the delicate spray and brilliance of *The Fountain of the Acqua Paola*, and the "chinking" of the broken glass in *An Old Song Re-Sung*.

It is not too much to say that Griffes was truly an individualist. What matters it whether or not each of the many idioms he employed, harmonic or melodic, are essentially new to him? Why should he not profit by that which had been done before him? In the development of his style Griffes was partly selective, and in some cases original. We never find him the slavish imitator of any one school. What he chose, and what he created for himself, he wove together in such a dexterous pattern that they became his own — and thus he built what we term individuality.

### III

The works of Griffes seem to fall naturally into three periods: the first, the student

period, when the composer was under the spell of the German influence. Take, for example, the last song from the first opus, *Wohl lag ich einst in Gram und Schmerz*, a brilliant song in the Straussian manner, straightforward, with few departures from well-trodden paths. The accompaniment figure is consistently and effectively used, and the result is a sincere, convincing song. In this same period we find *Zwei Könige sassen auf Orkadal*, a narrative song, similar in treatment to Brahms' handling of folk-songs. The accompaniment follows the vocal melody, consisting, as it does, largely of unharmonized octaves.



CHARLES T. GRIFFES

The second period of Griffes' work would include those compositions in which we find the composer breaking away from the German influence, thinking more independently, leaning rather in the direction of the French school, and giving evidence of the Russian neo-Orientalism which was to appear as the mysticism of the later works. *The Lake at Evening*, from the three tone pictures for piano, is perhaps best illustrative of this group; it gives evidence of the composer's rapidly developing power of description. The inspiration for the piece was drawn from the lines of Yeats:

... for always . . .

I hear lake water lapping with low sounds  
by the shore.



Even the unmusical will hear the "lapping water." The effect is gained by an *ostinato* figure insisting on its odd little rhythm. Rather than being monotonous, however, it tells us of the restful atmosphere of the placid lake. In this composition Griffes shows some "modern" tendencies, and while we cannot call him revolutionary, he is in a sense daring. He has not yet passed the point where academic analysis may fail to find justification for each dissonance.

The third period shows the unmistakably modern trend, the seeking for new mediums of expression, harmonies that defy analysis, the mysticism foreshadowed in the second period. There are times when we feel the composer yearning for something less rigid than our tempered scale to utter his thought, to express the interplay of overtones he wishes us to hear. This division of Griffes' work had its fruits in the *Sonata* for piano, his largest work for this instrument. The *Sonata* foreshadows what the Griffes of tomorrow might have been had he lived; it is not for those who prefer the obvious.

Throughout this composition we find the intellectual consistency of a Schönberg, the pursuit of tonal logic without the sacrifice of poetic conception. Although there are well-defined themes, introduced in traditional, formal order, it is the development of these themes that proves the more interesting study. Technically, the *Sonata* is most difficult to perform, a fact which prevents its ready appreciation by the average pianist.

#### IV

Through the evolutionary process of Griffes' writing we quite naturally discover much that is obvious experimentation. There are instances when we feel that the composer has overdone his descriptive tone painting, and we may be surfeited with a wealth of new ideas and idioms; but scattered throughout his works are milestones which mark his progress, pieces in which the composer takes his breath and becomes for the moment quite simple. It is here that we can peer inside and see what Griffes has accomplished.

The first milestone is *The Lake at Evening*, for it is with this piece that we first catch a glimpse of the individuality of the later Griffes.

We then go on through the companion pieces of *The Lake at Evening*: *The Vale of Dreams* and *The Night Winds*, and the Three Fantasy Pieces — *Barcarolle*, *Notturmo* and *Scherzo*. In these we sense the composer's

search for adequate means to express his ideas. Not satisfied with traditional formulas, he must evolve a style that will suit his purpose. Consequently, in *The Vale of Dreams* there are few consonant chords. *The Night Winds* is a restless piece that requires the services of a highly skilled interpreter.

In the *Barcarolle* Griffes has sought to establish the mystery of the sea by his harmonic and melodic coloring. Here we find him experimenting with the whole-tone scale, and, as in the *Notturmo* which follows, he employs successions of major thirds — the false relation of the tritone forbidden to students of strict counterpoint. In both pieces Griffes created the proper atmosphere, he used highly effective colors for his pictures. The *Scherzo* is a vividly wild dance with weird effects, legitimately gained.

We then come to the *Roman Sketches* for piano, Opus 7, and we are at another milestone. With these pieces Griffes approaches his artistic maturity, and we find him at the height of what we have termed his second period. First comes *The White Peacock*, who makes his bow with a chromatic theme whose languor immediately pictures the vain beauty of the gorgeous fowl. An exquisite succession of ninth-chords suggests the "preciousness," the effeminacy of the creature. *Nightfall*, the second piece of the group, brings to us the strange sounds of early evening, the almost oppressive quiet of it all. *The Fountain of the Acqua Paola* exquisitely describes the rise and fall of the fountain, the "shimmering lights" of the foam. *Clouds* begins with a theme of lofty inspiration, suggesting the grandeur of the cloud banks.

These *Roman Sketches* (some of them have been orchestrated) show what great progress Griffes has made in the development of his individual style. He has a firmer grasp of his material, his message is more direct, for experience seems to have taught him to economize in the use of the means at his command.

We reach the next milestone after we have passed into the third, and last, period. Going through three poems for voice and piano, Opus 9, in the latter two of which, *Wai Kiki* and *Phantom*, Griffes is showing almost radical tendencies, we come to the next resting-place, *Five Poems of Ancient China and Japan*, Opus 10. Here we have the true atmosphere of the Orient, and five-and-six-tone scales, the monotonous beating of Chinese in-



struments, a notable fidelity to the spirit of the texts, translated from native poets. In all of these settings we find the restraint so necessary to works of greatness. We never feel that the composer has done all he knew how to do; he has chosen for us only the choicest bits of his vocabulary.

Another milestone is reached immediately, for the first song of Opus 11 is the composer's setting of Fiona MacLeod's *The Lament of Ian the Proud*, originally written with orchestral accompaniment. Here is a great song, possessed of tremendous dramatic power. Although there is modern treatment in abundance, there is little to offend even the purist. The accompaniment contains exactly the proper amount of descriptive atmosphere. There are few more vivid passages than that which interprets:

O blown, whirling leaf,  
And the old Grief,  
And wind crying to me.

We then pass on through the other MacLeod settings, *Thy Dark Eyes to Mine*, and *Rose of the Night*, and we come to the setting of John Masefield's *An Old Song Re-Sung*.

This is one of the loveliest of all Griffes' songs. The beautiful vocal melody is of deliberate simplicity, the accompaniment has a directness that is found only in the work of master composers. At the end we have the composer's power of description in all its force. We feel the ship "a-sinking," and hear the broken glass "chinking as she sank among the wrecks."

In the companion to this song, Masefield's *Sorrow of Mydath*, Griffes took pains to lose not one bit of the poem's atmosphere, of the wailing, the despair, the desolate hopelessness of it all.

Then comes the piano *Sonata*.

## V

To the literature of chamber music Griffes contributed two Indian sketches for string quartet, published in an edition by Adolfo Betti, then first violinist of the Flonzaley Quartet. When the original version of these sketches was played in Boston by the Flonzaleys, the late Philip Hale, noted critic, wrote of the first Sketch, based upon a farewell song of Chippewa Indians, that it "is

singularly beautiful in the poetic treatment, in the dexterous employment of the instruments without a vain attempt to procure orchestral color. There is no anxious striving after effects, no desire to straighten the drowsy bourgeois in his seat, no effort to be original at any cost. The music is of a strange beauty, yet not remote, but warmly human . . . ."

The work that brought Griffes the widest recognition was *The Pleasure Dome of Kubla Khan*, for orchestra. The basis of the tone-poem is found in those lines of Coleridge's poem describing the "stately pleasure dome," the "sunny pleasure dome with caves of ice," the "miracle of strange device." Griffes attached the following "program" to the work:

"As to argument, I have given my imagination free rein in the description of this strange palace, as well as of purely imaginary revelry which might take place there. The vague, foggy beginning suggests the sacred river running 'through caverns measureless to man down to a sunless sea.' Then gradually rises the outline of the palace, 'with walls and towers girdled round.' The gardens with fountains and 'sunny spots of greenery' are next suggested. From inside come sounds of dancing and revelry which increase to a wild climax and then suddenly break off. There is a return to the original mood suggesting the sacred river and the 'caves of ice.'"

At the last we find the *Poem* for Flute and Orchestra, the most mature, and in many respects the most exquisite of all Griffes' works. Richard Aldrich described it as:

". . . . music of rare charm and individuality, gray in mood and in orchestral color till it merges into a dance movement of strange tonality with the suggestion of Oriental rhythm and Oriental coloring in the orchestra."

The *Poem*, first played by the composer's friend Georges Barrère, with unforgettable mastery, is truly a fitting climax to the published list of Griffes' compositions.

These, then, are the principal works of Charles T. Griffes, and it is by his published works alone that he must be judged. It is idle to speculate on what he might have become had Fate allowed him to produce more.



# Last Year's Records in Retrospect

By EMIL BENEDICT

Mr. Benedict follows up on his record survey *On Second Thought*, which appeared in the October, 1935 issue. As an ardent phonophile, the author not only presents his own views but those of a group with which he is associated. — *The Editor*.

IN keeping with the annual custom of selecting the best plays, motion pictures, phonograph records, etc., the editor, feeling that the many interesting developments in recording call for comment in addition to that given in the regular reviews, has asked me to jot down some impressions, sustained by me and a group of friendly phonophiles, resuming where I left off with my previous resumé published in the October, 1935 issue of the *American Music Lover*.

As regards recording done in this country, particularly orchestral, the dynamic range has been further extended with generally splendid results, only a few spots failing to come off satisfactorily owing to over-amplification. To be sure, there were complaints from those whose machines could not cope with certain high fidelity recordings, it being claimed (with some justification) that European engineers on the whole obtained fine balance, adequate volume and realism without causing distortion.

Toscanini's re-entry into recording lists was perhaps the most noteworthy event of 1936, but although his performances were about the finest known to records, the discs were not universally approved, because of the maestro's refusal to adjust his playing to the exigencies of recording — his dynamic contrasts being the point in question. In contrast, the Boston Symphony Orchestra, now a regular contributor under the batons of Koussevitzky and Fiedler, received fine recording, with scarcely any fault to be found. Under Koussevitzky, very little aside from duplication was accomplished. I wonder that we have not yet had a new version of Ravel's *Daphnis et Chloe Suite No. 2*, which under the Russian's baton becomes an exciting adventure to its listeners.

Of significance was English Decca's lengthy list of hitherto unrecorded Purcell. Handel, Haydn and Mozart and its whole-hearted championship of native composers, with the issuance of such works as William

Walton's *Symphony*, Bliss' *Clarinet Quintet* and Vaughan Williams' *London Symphony* and *Fantasia on a Theme of Thomas Tallis*, and the *Wasps Overture*. It is unfortunate, however, that complete enjoyment of these fine works has not been realized in this country because the American pressings fall definitely short of the best standards.

The domestic Columbia Company have earned the thanks of music lovers by its broad policy of combing the French Columbia catalogues for the many unhackneyed works they contain, by the recording of many American compositions of merit and the employment of native performers, by the release of so many fine items from the Pathé lists and by its stimulation of interest in the harpsichord and old music. By means of a lengthy list of fine recordings made by a newcomer, Miss Yella Pessl, this company has enriched its catalogue considerably. The Victor lists were splendid, but from all sides come inquiries as to why they have failed to re-press a quantity of European recordings as in former years.

Those who disapprove of restricted society issues received a small amount of satisfaction through the domestic release of the Bach organ records, the first and fourth Sibelius albums and Mozart's *Marriage of Figaro*. I do not wish to be ungrateful, but cannot refrain from observing that the evil of the whole society set-up is shown by the higher prices asked for the domestic re-pressings. Victor did issue the Sibelius sets in their proper price levels, but failed to do so in the case of the Mozart, which as a non-society set would undoubtedly have cost only \$1.50 per record. This also applies to Columbia's Bach set, which is a poser for those wishing to buy less than the entire lot but unable to do so because of "restrictions imposed by the Society."

One of my greatest phonographic thrills was the first hearing of the new society set of three lovely Mozart sonatas for violin and piano, namely, *C Major* (K-296); *G Major*



(K-379); and *E Flat Major* (K-481), played by Simon Goldberg and Lili Krauss. Lack of space precludes adequate discussion of these discs, so I shall content myself by merely stating that I have never encountered so complete a realization of a composer's intent and spirit. Here is real Mozart playing in the aristocratic manner by two sterling musicians. Recording is outstanding and an object lesson to those engineers who believe that in records of this type, the pianist should be seen but not heard. Those responsible for this album have set themselves a high standard and their next Mozart album will be awaited with keen anticipation.

Bruckner came into his own with two excellent recordings of his *Fourth* and *Seventh Symphonies*. The latter, by the Minneapolis under Ormandy, is most life-like, though its brilliant amplification has caused concern to some people. The *Fourth*, by the Saxon State Opera Orchestra under Karl Boehm, is well played and its carefully balanced recording presents no difficulties such as attended the other. Dvorak fared happily through more than adequate performances of his *Fourth* and *Fifth Symphonies*, *Slavonic Dances* and *Rhapsody No. 3*. The last mentioned is not a masterpiece, but these discs are a notable example of what can be done for such a composition by a musician of Beecham's calibre. His accomplishments with the Brahms *Second*, Haydn's *No. 99*, Wagner's *A Faust Overture* and *Meistersinger Prelude*, the Delius Society album and Bizet's *L'Arlesienne Suite No. 1*, beggar description.

### Beethoven Re-recordings

Columbia continued on its way toward an up to date Beethoven symphonic list by adding Weingartner's version of the *Fifth*, *Seventh*, and *Ninth*, with the *Third* and *Eighth* in the offing. The *Fifth* and *Ninth*, in my opinion, stand supreme. The *Seventh*, is up to their standard, but overshadowed by Toscanini's set, which is more vivid as recording and more exciting as a performance.

The Philadelphia Orchestra recordings of Brahms' *First Symphony*, Dvorak's *New World*, *Scheherazade*, *The Fire Bird*, *Nutcracker Suite* and *Danse Macabre*, all duplications, are nothing short of magnificent, but rather a problem for any but the best of reproducing apparatus. *Bali* and *Etenraku* can be recommended as most interesting novelties. While music lovers are indebted to Stokowski for his Bach transcriptions, I look with misgivings upon a newly developed ten-

dency toward gilding the lily, as witness the embellishments lavished upon Vivaldi's *Concerto Grosso in D Minor*, which hardly needs this sort of treatment.

Columbia lifted the phonograph to new heights of dignity almost two years ago by giving us Bach's *Art of the Fugue*. In the past year, it has again placed Bach lovers in its debt with superb performances of the six *Brandenburg Concertos* (played by the Busch Chamber Players) and the set of organ works done by Dr. Schweitzer. Not to be outdone, English H. M. V. has recorded Busch's ensemble in the four orchestral suites of Bach, which Victor is arranging promptly to release in this country.

I must not forget the tribute paid Liszt by means of Pathé's capable rendition of *A Faust Symphony*, re-issued here by Columbia. From the same sources we have a new Berlioz's *Fantastique* and an engaging ballet suite from Gretry's *La Rosiere Républicaine*. It is to be regretted that the good impression recently created by the Pasquier Trio in its concert appearances, was not followed up by the release of one of its Pathé sets, but perhaps this omission will be rectified shortly.

### Other Orchestral Records

Among the remaining orchestral recordings I heard may be mentioned the following, all of them reaching a high level of competence: Sibelius' *First* and *Second Symphonies*, the tone poems *Oceanides* and *Night Ride and Sunrise*, the overtures to Handel's *Samson* and *Berenice*, Rimsky-Korsakoff's *Capriccio Espagnole* (by the Boston Pops in a recording well nigh perfect), and the Curtis Ensemble in Tansman's *Triptyque*. Among the number of fine recordings of violin and orchestra that made their appearance in the past year, I cannot recall one more arresting than the Telefunken set of Spohr's *Concerto in A Minor*, in which Georg Kulenkampff gives a truly virtuoso performance. The recording fully captures the concert hall atmosphere. Heifetz has said almost the last word in his recordings of the concertos of Sibelius, Vieuxtemps and Wieniawski, and also in his recording of Saint-Saens' short *Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso*. Kreisler's remakes of the Mendelssohn, Beethoven and Brahms concertos are good, but not unmatched. Mozart's *Third* and *Fourth Concertos* are capably set forth in the Huberman and Szigeti versions. Those interested in something out of the ordinary should investigate the Prokofieff concerto, in which Szigeti and



Beecham combine to turn out a set of an extraordinary high level.

The Haydn and Dvorak cello concertos, played respectively by Feuermann and Casado, probably surpass all other recordings of this type; and so too does the French H. M. V. set of Mozart's *Flute Concertos in G* (K-313), played by Marcel Moyse.

Piano concertos have been numerous in the past fifteen months. Some of them, from the standpoint of realism, represent an advance over previous efforts. I doubt whether anything has appeared quite as good as Brahms' *B Flat Concerto* and MacDowell's *Second Concerto in D Minor*. In the Brahms, Schnabel's tone is as natural as life and the balance with the orchestra is well realized. My first hearing of the MacDowell concerto was actually thrilling. I was just in the act of beaming at the rich orchestral tone when suddenly the piano rang out in a startling manner. It was just about the best reproduction of that instrument I remembered hearing on records. While Sanroma and the orchestra give an excellent performance, the greater glory belongs to the Victor engineers. That phonographic best seller, Mozart, again hogged honors with a half dozen works. The best was the *E Flat* (K-482), another feather in the cap of Edwin Fischer.

### Chamber Music

Chamber music was again well represented. For music, interpretation and recording, I would hand the palm to English Columbia's society set of Purcell's works. The string fantasias have a breath-taking beauty. Of the Roth Quartet contributions, they seem best represented by the Haydn *Quartets in C Major and F Minor*. For me, the Leners outdid themselves in Beethoven's *A Minor Quartet, Opus 132*, recorded with remarkable clarity and balance. Those who are not quite satisfied with their interpretation of this quartet no doubt will find solace in awaiting a future Victor set. When this materializes, I trust it will be done by the Budapest Quartet, whose recent concert performance was a most gratifying musical experience. Other praiseworthy releases were Schubert's *Quintet in C, Opus 163*, and the *Forellen Quintet in A, Opus 114*, Mendelssohn's *E Flat Quartet*, and Faure's *Piano Quartet in C Minor, Opus 15*.

Turning to piano solos: Cortot's set of Chopin *Preludes* is excellent, and so, too, is Beethoven's *Appassionata Sonata* in a striking performance by Fischer. That giant of the keyboard, Egon Petri, made a fine start with

the *Opp.* 87, 90 and 111 of Beethoven. By a strange and happy coincidence, these recordings duplicate the contents of Schnabel's first society album, no longer obtainable. It is heartening to know that complete dependence on society sets for the Beethoven sonatas is a thing of the past. Victor's album of Brahms' shorter works nicely supplements their similar release of several years ago.

I wish to pay tribute to the consummate musicianship of Wanda Landowska, as exemplified by three superb albums devoted to Scarlatti, Bach and Handel. The accounting of Scarlatti's little sonatas, in which her delicate sense of tone coloring and characterization within the limits of the harpsichord leave one at a loss for words, places this set on the same lofty level of artistry occupied by the Mozart Violin sonatas and Purcell fantasias mentioned above.

### The Advent of Nathan Milstein

A significant addition to the recording violinists was Nathan Milstein, with a generous list faithfully reflecting his numerous fine qualities. Menuhin's newest release, of Bach's *Third Unaccompanied Sonata*, is perhaps his best recorded performance. The violin and piano sonatas of Elgar and Enesco deserve mention here, for both are works of interest.

The past year and a half has witnessed the revival of full length opera recordings and the filling in of many gaps in the realm of song. Most important in the field of opera is the first act recording of *Die Walküre*, Verdi's *Falstaff*, the French abridged versions of *Louise* and *Orpheus*, and the recent issue of the fourth act of *La Boheme* — the latter further testimony of Beecham's extraordinary musicianship. George Thill's contributions continue to be about the best single operatic discs. His aria from Act 3 of *Samson et Dalila* is without a flaw and the record can easily serve as a model of what can be done in the matter of recording soloist, chorus and orchestra.

Large scale recording of songs seems to have come into its own. I believe the realization of the necessary factors entering into the production of a successful disc of this type has best been accomplished in the Victor album of Debussy songs. The choice of Maggie Teyte and Alfred Cortot as interpreters was an inspiration, and aided by perfect recording they completely project the atmosphere which Debussy so magically created in his exquisite little songs. Cortot's fine accompaniments also aided Charles Panzera in a

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# Some Americans in England

By NEVILLE d'ESTERRE

**L**ILLIAN BAILEY, a native of Columbus, Ohio, was an admirable singer, and a woman of singular beauty and charm. It used to be said in London, nearly half a century ago, that many people went to concerts where she sang, not so much to hear her as to see her. If they did, they were rewarded by singing of the highest artistic quality. The critics generally were her slaves, and she drew words of commendation even from George Bernard Shaw.

It was not as Lillian Bailey, but as Mrs. Henschel, that she was known to the public. She was the wife of that fine musician and great man, Georg Henschel; and her appearances on the concert platform were made chiefly at his orchestral concerts at the old St. James's Hall in Piccadilly. Mine, however, was the privilege of hearing her sing at the home of my parents, with her husband at the piano. My mother was herself a professional singer, and we were living at that time almost within a stone's throw of the Henschels' house in Bedford Gardens, Kensington. A fast friendship existed between the Henschels and my mother, and her musical evenings at home were seldom complete without their presence. I am speaking of the early Nineties of the last century, when the world of music in London was a very brilliant world. The names of most of those brilliant performers of music are forgotten. Lillian Henschel herself is but a shadowy recollection in the minds of a few elderly people; and, if her husband is remembered, it is as the Sir George Henschel of more recent years, whose venerable figure presented itself on rare occasions to the public view, to teach a younger generation how the great German ballads ought to be sung.

Mrs. Henschel came one day to my mother — the year, I think, must have been 1892 — to tell her of a wonderful new soprano from Boston, who displayed a faultless sense of pitch, combined with an astonishing vocal range, soaring from a strong and true middle register to an incredible Himalayan C; and doing so, moreover, without any perceptible effort. The girl, whose name was Evangeline

Houghton, but who had assumed the professional name of Evangeline Florence, had lately arrived in England; and, since the engagements of the Henschels obliged them to travel about a good deal, Mrs. Henschel hoped that my mother would be kind to Evangeline Florence, and take her under her wing.

Mrs. Henschel's description of Evangeline's voice was in no sense exaggerated. Of its kind



LILLIAN BAILEY HENSCHEL

that voice was perfection — pure, smooth, sweet, strong on every register. And her voice production was quite effortless. The pretty child, looking like the most delicate of Chelsea figures, stood by the piano and parted her lips, and the notes rippled forth like the song of a nightingale. She had, however, one defect, which she was never able to overcome; and she could not overcome it because it took birth in her personality. Always she sang the notes of which melody is made, and not the music of which the notes are the medium of expression. Her delivery was quite wanting in warmth and passion; and so it remained — always bird-like, rather than



human. And this was not the result of a lack of understanding, for she was a good musician of discriminating taste; it was a simple inability (psychological as much as physical) to communicate her musicianship to the act of singing. Or, to express it otherwise, she could sing, but she could not act — could not bring her art and her life into conjunction. This defect is, of course, common enough in executive musicians of every kind, and was, in fact, the characteristic failing of that famous contralto, Clara Butt. My mother was a born interpreter, to whom singing was merely a branch of executive musicianship; and she bestowed upon Evangeline Florence a great deal of gratuitous instruction and advice. It was of no avail. Everybody acknowledged that Evangeline had one of the most wonderful voices that had ever been heard; but nobody accepted her as a great singer.

She married — very happily — a genial Scotchman called Alexander Crerar, and made England her permanent home. But her artistic career was a succession of disappointments for her. She desired to excel in the music she most admired — the art songs of Schumann, and Brahms, and Hugo Wolf. And she drifted from one provincial engagement to another, trilling Handel's "Sweet bird", and Bishop's "Lo! the gentle lark", *ad nauseam*. And this sort of thing went on until the tragic day when her sense of pitch began to play her false, and she could no longer achieve her Himalayan C, or anything in its neighborhood.

Among the several instructors to whom she went for guidance and training was David Bispham, who had his headquarters in London at that time. Quite recently I came across a reference to Bispham in an English newspaper, in which he was spoken of as "a Quaker singer". Well, of course, Bispham was a Quaker by ancestry and upbringing; and he took a proper pride in his descent from the original settlers in Pennsylvania. But, to mention him merely as "a Quaker singer" is to depreciate one of the greatest of all dramatic baritones — a singer who vied with Santley at his best, and beside whom Anton van Rooy was a mere tyro.

Now, I have to confess that when I am listening to that part of the second act of *Die Walküre* when Wotan occupies the centre of the stage, I resign myself as a rule to a long spell of boredom. At the same time I am willing to admit that the blame rests less on Wagner than on those German bari-

tones who one after another, have been selected to declaim the part of the one-eyed god to civilized audiences. And my readiness to accept this conclusion rests upon my recollection of Bispham in that character. When he was on the stage there was not a moment of tedium in that scene, such was the vitality of his art. As for his Telramund and his Kurwenal, they were tremendous, and positively outshone the Lohengrin and Tristan of Jean de Reszke. His singing and his acting were a perfect unity; above all other singers of whom I have knowledge, he was one with that which he sang. A poor way of putting it, perhaps; but a singer will understand, even if a patron of singing fails to do so. A facetious reporter recently described a certain singer as "getting outside" a song in a satisfactory way. If he had ever heard Bispham sing the *Doppelgänger* or *Ich grolle nicht* he would have realized how far more satisfactory it was for a singer to "get inside" a song.

At about this same period the name of Nordica began to be familiar to musical people in London. If I had to summarize the art of Lillian Nordica in a single proposition, I should say that she was among dramatic sopranos very much what David Bispham was among dramatic baritones. She was a great Isolde and a great Brünnhilde. But, like Bispham, she displayed an infinite variety in her art. I can give her no better testimonial than by describing the last occasion on which I heard her. It was one of the regular concerts of the London Symphony Orchestra, and the conductor was Arthur Nikisch. Nordica sang Beethoven's *Ah Perfido*, a work which presents few problems to a singer of the first order. The inevitable frenzy of applause having greeted her performance, and showing no sign of abating after several minutes, she intimated that she would oblige the audience with something else. Whereupon a grand piano was trundled from one of the wings to mid-stage, and, with Nikisch himself at the keyboard, she proceeded to sing Schubert's *Erlkönig*. Now *Erlkönig*, as the youthful Schubert so miraculously recognized, is in itself a complete drama in which the dialogue is uttered by several characters. I have heard at least fifty different singers in that song, and all of them have attempted to produce the essential contrast between the three different characters. In most cases the audible outcome has been merely that of one individual trying to sing in three different voices. I make three

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# On Bruckner's Scoring

With Reference to the Fourth Symphony

By WALTER LEGGE

IT has been known for some time among students of Bruckner that the scores from which his works have been played, as well as the miniature scores, varied in certain respects from the manuscripts. The nature, the full extent, and even the causes of these differences between the manuscripts and the printed scores and parts are not yet all known, but the publication of several volumes of the Critical Complete Edition of Bruckner's works by the Musikwissenschaftlicher Verlag of Vienna, under the editorship of Robert Haas and Alfred Orel has revealed in the older scores a mass of editings, discrepancies, alterations and falsifications without precedent or parallel in the history of music.

It may be well here to briefly review the relation between the scores by which Bruckner's symphonies have hitherto been known and upon which the existing estimate of him has been based, and the recent published scores which are held to be authentic Bruckner, "founded on the last known wishes of the composer." The old scores are the result of editing made by at least three men — Franz Schalk, his brother Josef, and Ferdinand Loewe. Bruckner's simplicity and servility are proverbial — in his naive gratitude he tipped Hans Richter a thaler for conducting the first performance of his *Fourth Symphony*. Bruckner was not well treated by the majority of his Viennese contemporaries. Brahms despised him, and Hanslick, as the avowed anti-Wagnerian and loud-speaker of the Brahms party, saw to it that Bruckner was well and thoroughly damned in the most widely read section of the Viennese press. Bruckner had a small but brilliant group of admirers who regarded him as Wagner's symphonic counterpart. The leading lights of this group of young progressives were Hugo Wolf and the aforementioned editors of the scores. To the end of his life Bruckner lacked complete confidence in his powers and he craved performances of his music. His child-like and pathetic reverence for men of any

eminence made him wax in the hands of such cultivated and already well-known young men as the Schalks and Loewe. They, for their part, acted with the best of intentions. They were above all things Wagnerian, their ideal of instrumentation was that it should make music sound like Wagner's, and since Bruckner's scores were not Wagnerian enough they altered them until they came nearer to their ideal specification. Their line of reasoning seems to have been that this process of Wagnerization was the only satisfactory and speedy way of establishing Bruckner in the esteem of the important section of the public which shared their Wagnerian tastes. It is not known with any degree of certainty to what extent Bruckner himself willingly acquiesced to these emendations — it is, I think, probable that to get his works performed he would have agreed to alterations even more drastic than those to which the Schalks subjected them; but there exists evidence which leads one to believe that he regarded the alterations as a temporary measure. Only in the last two years have some of Bruckner's original scores been published and the records of the *Fourth Symphony* are made from the newly published *Originalfassung* which was first performed in Germany a few months ago, in Austria at the Linz Festival in July 1936, and in London by the Royal Philharmonic Society, on November 12th, 1936. Dr. Karl Böhm conducted both the German and the London performances. The principal importance of the publication of the authentic scores is that they compel a re-estimation of each of Bruckner's orchestral works and of Bruckner as a composer. The weightiest and most often repeated criticisms of Bruckner have been directed at the frequent long pauses — his habit of stopping, drawing a line and taking a deep breath before starting again —, his too frequent employment of pedal points, his many changes of tempo and his Wagnerian orchestration (c.f. Professor Tovey's suggestion that Bruckner would make a welcome substitute in the concert repertoire for bleeding chunks of butcher's



meat chopped from Wagner's operas). Nearly all the charges upon which Bruckner has been arraigned and condemned are the faults of his editors, not of Bruckner himself. He had his faults, but they were not those for which he has been blamed, and the publication of the new scores and of these records is most important step to the revaluation of a great composer long neglected, underestimated and misunderstood in this country.

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## SOME AMERICANS IN ENGLAND

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exceptions, however. John Coates pulled it off — achieved, that is to say, the fundamental contrast of character by means of slight changes of expression. Elena Gerhardt did the same. But Nordica was the first to do it in my experience. Modern people believe no more in Goethe's bogey-men than in Wagner's magic swords and protective stars; but I do not mind admitting that my blood turned a little cold when Nordica, in the character of the *Erlkönig*, passed, at the climax of the song, from cajolery to menace. There was the genius of Schubert, of course, behind that thrill; but it takes a great singer to turn such touches of genius to account. Other singers have actually *spoken* those words, instead of singing them, thereby abandoning Schubert, and going off on their own account; and, far from being thrilled, I have felt ashamed to be in the same room with them — ashamed to be one of a crowd which could tolerate such a travesty.

I have a proposition to advance here which is not likely to meet with general agreement. It is that the phase of time of which I have been speaking — roughly from 1885-1910 — was that in which the art of singing rose to its highest perfection. There may have been equally great singers in the preceding half century; but they were fewer in numbers. There may have been an equal number of accomplished singers in more recent years; but there have not been so many superlative ones. Now, in that period the drift of great exponents of singing across the Atlantic was quite definitely from West to East. Europe was looking to America for great singers, and not looking in vain. Albani — one of the supreme artists of all time — had come to England from Canada. Antoinette Sterling had been the queen among contraltos. Susan Strong was a dramatic *mezzo* of the first order. Emma Eames had few equals as a lyrical soprano, either in opera or on the

concert platform. And to the same period belong the names of Herbert Witherspoon, Clarence Whitehill, Leonora Sparkes, Edith Walker, Maud Fay, and Geraldine Farrar. In about the year 1900 it would have been quite feasible to produce an opera like *Tannhäuser* or *Die Meistersinger* at Covent Garden, or even at Vienna or Munich, with an all-American cast of principals — admitting the Canadian, Hedmond, as the leading tenor. Such a cast would have satisfied the most exacting requirements.

If America exports singers to Europe at the present day, most of them are of rather a different kind — one might almost say, thinking of Bispham and Nordica, of a different species of humanity. Of what remains in an impoverished and nerve-stricken world of the art of great singing, the drift at the present time is decidedly from East to West. It ought not to be so. In every branch of executive musicianship America ought to be leading the world: because she ought, in the nature of things, to be leading the world in creative musicianship as well. When Europe was full of great artists, America sent over an army of them; and now that Europe is calling for them America can only respond with crooners, and persons who strive to extend the range of the art of vocalism by means of selections from the repertory of hyenas, baggage camels, and tom cats. May I be forgiven for suggesting that such exhibitions of art do little honor to the memory of the great artists whose names I have mentioned?

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## TOSCANINI AND BLACK TO FORM MAJOR LINKS

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the Spring of 1938, because the Maestro's contract with the NBC Symphony Orchestra will not begin before the end of the present year. And there is, of course, another factor to consider, for recordings have not been discussed to date with Toscanini. But, since Mr. Sarnoff assures us that "the opportunity to bring his message of music to the countless millions of American listeners has made a great appeal to the Maestro," we feel certain that Mr. Sarnoff will do all in his power to have Toscanini perpetuate his work with the NBC Symphony Orchestra. Under Toscanini's guidance, this organization should rank as the foremost symphony orchestra in America, and any records made should prove among the best, if not the finest, ever issued.



# Overtones

## A New Mahler Recording

IT is gratifying to read in the European lists that both Bruno Walter and Felix Weingartner are recording extensively with Vienna's Philharmonic Orchestra, one of the oldest and best organizations of its kind in Europe.

With the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Bruno Walter recently made Beethoven's *Sixth* or *Pastoral Symphony* (six discs), and with the same orchestra, assisted by the chorus of the *Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde*, Kirsten Thorborg and Charles Kullman, the distinguished Metropolitan Opera contralto and tenor, he has made Mahler's *Das Lied von der Erde*.

The Mahler work is deeply impressive and one of the finest compositions that the composer has left us. It has deserved phonographic perpetuation before this, but undoubtedly because of its length and the necessity for fine singers and a capable chorus it has not been advantageous for a company to plan its recording. Walter, in permitting the issue of this recording, states that "I am not unaware of occasional minor imperfections which are inseparable from public performance. I am confident, however, that all lovers of Mahler will appreciate the spontaneity and atmosphere of the concert hall which strengthens the general musical impression of the performance." We feel certain that music lovers throughout the world will heartily endorse Walter's decision. Domestic Columbia will sponsor this recording in this country.

## New Delius Society

A second Delius Society album has been released in England. The latest set contains one of the most beautiful works of its kind ever written, *Sea Drift*. The words of this composition are taken from our Walt Whitman, and strange as it may seem Delius has conveyed the Whitman spirit better than any other composer.

*Sea Drift* is for baritone solo, chorus and orchestra, and in the recording is sung by

John Brownlee, the new Metropolitan Opera baritone, the London Select Choir with the London Philharmonic Orchestra under the direction of Sir Thomas Beecham.

Besides *Sea Drift*, the new album contains two excerpts from Delius' opera *Fennimore and Gerda*, an orchestral composition called *Over the Hills and Far Away* (no program), and the exquisitely tender idyll for orchestra *In a Summer Garden*. Sir Thomas Beecham has conducted all the music and superintended the whole venture so we can be assured that it is as Delius would have wished it. There are seven records in the album. Rumor has it that domestic Columbia may release the issue here in the near future.

For those interested, the editor, who has written considerably on Delius in American periodicals, is preparing a new article on this composer and the new album for an early issue of *The American Music Lover*.

## On Duplications

As one English reviewer has said, there is no end of *Unfinisheds*. The latest is conducted by Erich Kleiber and recorded by Telefunken.

One can safely predict that the next five years will see many duplications of favorite works of this magnitude. Many people decry duplications, but we view their advent differently. One of the prime functions of the phonograph should be to provide more than one great reading of a great work.

## Latest French Releases

News from Paris tells us that Menuhin and the Paris Symphony Orchestra, under the direction of George Enesco, have recorded Bach's *First Violin Concerto in A minor* (two discs).

Charles Panzéra, the admirable French baritone, with his talented wife Mme. Panzéra-Baillet at the piano, has sung Fauré's song cycle *L'Orizon Chimérique*. There are four songs in this cycle, which is dedicated to M. Panzéra.



A singer new to us, Pierre Bernac, with Francois Poulenc at the piano, has recorded a group of French songs including Fauré's *Prison* and *Jardin Nocturne*, Debussy's *Trois Chansons de France-Le Grotte* and *Deux Rondels*, Ravel's *Sainte* and *Sur l'Herbe*, and Chabrier's *L'Île Heureuse* and *Ballade des Gros Dindons*. Since French critics have been extremely laudatory in their praise of these discs, we await their importation with great interest.

Elisabeth Schumann is represented in the latest Parisian lists, where this gifted artist is as much beloved as in England and this country, by a new disc containing Schubert's *Auf dem Wasser zu singen*, *Der Jüngling und der Quelle*, and *Geheimes*. Rumor has it that RCA-Victor intends issuing an album of familiar Lieder from this soprano. This disc will undoubtedly be included in the album.

#### Vol. 4 — Bach Society

The Bach Society has come forward with Volume Four of The Well-Tempered Clavier. The latest volume contains Nos. 35 to 43 of the *Preludes and Fugues*. It is played, of course, by Edwin Fischer.

#### Furtwaengler to Record for H. M. V.

Rumor has it that Furtwängler is to make a series of major recordings for HMV in London. Here we must speak for duplications, for Furtwängler is too famous for his readings of many of the already well-recorded prime favorites not to have him re-record some of them. As a matter of fact to fail to have him duplicate would be not to give him a representation of his genius.

*The American Music Lover* recommends that this conductor be permitted to record Brahms' *First Symphony* and Beethoven's *Fifth Symphony*. His readings of both these works are almost legends today. For unrecorded works we suggest the Schubert *Tragic Symphony*, another Mahler Symphony, and Beethoven's *Second*.

#### Brahms' Society Issue

The *Brahms Song Society*, newly formed in England, has issued a first album. The singer is Alexander Kipnis and his accompanist is Gerald Moore. There are six discs in the album with fourteen songs.

Kipnis has apparently excelled himself if that could be possible, according to English reviewers.

The album contains the following songs: *Von Ewiger Liebe*, *Erinnerung*, *Die Mainacht*, *Vier Ernste Gesänge*, *Ein Sonnett*, *Sonntag*, *O Wüsst Ich doch den Weg zurück*, *Ständchen*, *Vergebliches Ständchen*, *Verrat*, and *An die Nachtigall*.

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### LAST YEAR'S RECORDS

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praiseworthy rendition of Schumann's *Dichterliebe* cycle, a product of French H. M. V.

Lotte Lehmann's album of *Lieder* was most commendable in interpretation and recording of her voice, but the full meaning of these fine songs could not be conveyed to the utmost because of failure properly to emphasize the importance of the accompaniments; the piano was placed too far from the microphone. The Moussorgsky songs in Parlophone's society album have the ideal interpreter in Vladimir Rosing and make up a most enjoyable set of records, more so than Columbia's albums of songs by Robert Franz and Erich J. Wolff, where one could not help regretting the limitations of Ernst Wolff's voice so far as varying the color of the different songs is concerned.

In closing, mention should be made of *The Friends of Recorded Music*, sponsored by this publication. Collectors of fine records have hailed this new venture, recognizing that its carefully selected repertoire will be of invaluable aid in supplementing the activities of the commercial companies in building up their catalogues where most needed. The Society's initial releases have fully deserved their favorable reception. A new enterprise, known as *Musicraft Records, Inc.*, has recently appeared on the horizon. While differing from *The Friends of Recorded Music* in that it is a commercial concern, it has also embarked on a policy of recording out of the way items in the repertory of older music. I have found that their records are indeed good, both in the matter of performance and recording. The ideals behind both *The Friends of Recorded Music* and *Musicraft Records, Inc.* are the kind that deserve encouragement and support.



# The Library Shelf

## THE VICTOR BOOK OF THE OPERA

Revised by Charles O'Connell. Price \$2.00

**T**HE new *Victor Book of the Opera*, revised by versatile Charles O'Connell, is a more sizeable and aspiring volume than its predecessors. Profusely illustrated and with a photogravure cover giving greater prominence to leading American singers, it is as entertaining from the picture side as its informative in its text. The pictures of famous opera houses come first, followed by a gallery of famous artists who have made Victor records. Artists the present generation knows and admires take precedence among the stories; the pictures of celebrities of former days, such as Farrar, Eames, Schumann-Heink and Dalmores are gone. Only Caruso and Scotti survive the past. There are full page plates, unexpectedly ironic, such as the Pons-Lakmé picture in which the singer's umbilicus looms more engaging than her bejewelled head-dress or her toothsome smile, and Tibbett's superannuated Toreador with unexplainably lifted four fingers.

There are stories of some 120 operas, including Gilbert and Sullivan's comic operas, and such recent scores as *Caponsacchi*, *Merry Mount* and *The Emperor Jones*. Mr. O'Connell has, on the whole, done a good job in his revision and extension of text, but we do feel that he might have advantageously revised the opening chapter on *What Is an Opera*. For example, the remarks relative to singing opera in English no longer hold true. We have singers today who can sing in English, and many opera singers of our own. Regarding foreign artists singing in English, it might be well if they were required to sing in our language, just as our singers are required to sing in theirs when appearing in their countries. It is ludicrous to contend still that "America is a very young country, operatically speaking, and up to the present we have produced few opera singers." Such a statement should not emanate from an American organization like RCA-Victor. What is intended, of course, is not implied. America is a young country in the creation of opera, but not in the production of it, despite the fact that we rely on wealthy patrons to support it. To say that we have produced few opera singers is no longer true; as a matter of fact, even in the past we produced some

of the greatest of all. Farrar, Eames, Homer, Edythe Walker, Johnson, Martin, Whitehill, Van Hoose — the names could go on and on. *An Outline History of Opera* is an essay which deserved to be lengthened. There is more, much more, to say on this subject.

The new book contains 100 more pages than its predecessor, and is handsomely bound in red and gray. It's a 'must have' for the library shelf.

—Paul Girard.

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## EDITORIAL

(Continued from Page 361)

The Brunswick Record Co., affiliated with Columbia, who have been active in recent years only in the popular field, have issued a new and imposing catalog of classics drawn from recordings made in the last couple of years by Polydor in Europe. The new recordings, brought out under a label of Brunswick-Polydor with a red, gold printed seal, are comparable in quality to the best Columbia discs, and the material used is the same laminated stock. For best results in a first playing of these records, we recommend the use of a chromium needle — thereafter B.C.N.-Non-Metallic needles or shadowgraph will function better.

Since these new recordings were placed on the market just before we went to press, it was impossible for us to cover any of them in a formal review. Comment, however, on some we have been able to hear can be made here. Kempff's performance of Beethoven's *Hammerklavier Sonata* heads the list in our estimation, because it is not only equally as fine an interpretation of this work as Schnabel's, but because it is a more veritable reproduction of the piano. Stravinsky's *Violin Concerto*, also a lifelike recording, is an interesting and provocative work; and the same can be said of Alban Berg's *Lyric Suite*. Kempff has made a fine recording of Bach's *Fifth French Suite*, one which will undoubtedly set up a cry for encores. A long list of excellent vocal records is headed by a most expressive performance of the *Trio* from *Der Rosenkavalier* with Tina Lemnitz as the Marschellin. And Roussel's *Third Symphony*, in a brilliant performance by Albert Wolff and the Lamoureux Orchestra, is a "must have" for admirers of contemporary music.



# Record Notes and Reviews

Reviewers in this Issue: A. P. De Weese, Paul Girard, William Kozlenko,  
Philip Miller and Peter Hugh Reed

## ORCHESTRAL

BACH: *Suite No. 1 in C major*, and *Suite No. 2 in B minor*; played by the Adolf Busch Chamber Players, Adolf Busch, conductor. Victor set M-332, six discs, price \$9.00.

BACH'S four suites or ouvertures, as they were originally called since they were based on the extended style of Lully's overtures, form the completion of his instrumental chamber music. Like the *Brandenburg Concertos*, they are full of genuine instrumental effects and interest. No one has ever been able to ascertain whether these works were written at Cöthen or Leipzig, although Terry believes that the *C major* and the *B minor Suites*, scored for strings and woodwind, "were suited to the equipment of the Cöthen Capelle."

Although there have been previous issues of the *Second* and *Third Suites*, no recordings have ever been made of the *First* and *Fourth*, so the fact that Busch and his excellent Chamber Players have recorded all four is not only good news but news over which to rejoice. Busch's recording of the *Second* and *Third Suites* is no mere duplication, since existent recordings of these works are by modern symphony orchestras and not by a chamber group such as Bach intended them for. Busch's success with the *Brandenburg Concertos* recently placed him in line for the recording of these suites. At the outset, let me say, his performances here are not only equally successful, but, in my estimation, even better. The rococo charm of the music, its stateliness, its elegance and its grace, is undeniably best conveyed by a small orchestra. A modern symphony tends to destroy not only the spirit of the music, but the proportions of Bach's instrumentation as well.

The *First Suite* is not as inspired as the *Second*, but it nonetheless owns a definite charm. "In the dance melodies of these suites," says Schweitzer, "a fragment of a

vanished world of grace and elegance has been preserved for us." It is this "vanished world of grace and elegance" of which we are reminded in the music of the *First Suite*. The plastic perfection of the *Second Suite* can be traced to the solo flute part, which is both difficult and exacting. In the recording, the French flautist Marcel Moyse plays this part with a rare linear flexibility.

The importance of the *Suites* cannot be overstressed, nor can the fact that they are so ideally realized in recorded performances. Next month, Mr. Kozlenko will contribute an article on the four *Suites*; and Victor, who is to be congratulated on their prompt domestic release of the first two, will undoubtedly bring forward the others.

Recording here seems to me to be most satisfactory.

—P. H. R.

\* \* \* \*

BEETHOVEN: *Symphony No. 3 in E flat, Opus 55 (Eroica)*; played by the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, direction Felix Weingartner. Columbia set No. 285, six discs, price \$9.00.

HERE is a noble reading of a noble symphony. Weingartner is the old hand with the young mind. He shapes the music thoughtfully, and yet he attests its vitality, its bigness, its strength and its fervor. Note the dignity of his opening. The metronome mark is faster than the pace he sets, but the rightness of his pace cannot be refuted. Over thirty years ago he reasoned this out, and most conductors have followed his markings ever since. The marking in the score, he has stated in his book *On the Performance of Beethoven's Symphonies*, produces such a quick time that many passages "cannot possibly be clearly brought out." One cannot listen to this interpretation of a notable first movement without feeling that the conductor



has thought out each passage carefully and shaped the whole thing with true understanding and appreciation of its implications. The music is heroic, fervent, sinewy and strong, but it is not trivial in character — its motion, its stride must be dignified.

Dignity is the keynote of the *Marcia funebre*. Once again Weingartner has found it advisable to disregard the metronome marking in the score. "The stepping-forward character of this movement must be preserved in spite of the *Adagio assai*," he tells us; and yet he paces the music slower than the metronome marking. But he does not make the music lugubrious; there are no tears here. The procession belongs to an unknown hero. We are accompanying the people who are honoring a great hero, whose deeds are not enumerated but implied. The opening of that ingenious development section (beginning of side 7 of the recording), the grandiose *fugato*, as Weingartner marks it, "should not be hurried, it should advance with brazen footsteps like the chorus in a tragedy of Aeschylus." The implication of a Greek tragedy here is well taken, for the universal note sounded in each is similar. Mark the ending of this side of the recording; Weingartner knows when to animate to procure a truly powerful effect.

The bouyancy of the *Scherzo* is maintained throughout. "The Trio should be fresh and energetic without any change in tempo." In these words, Weingartner has given us the keynote to his interpretation of this movement. The last movement can be hurried; Weingartner believes the tempo should slow up slightly after the joyful introduction, and rightly too. The skill of an old hand can be marked in this music making, but the alertness and vitality of it all belies the conductor's age. I have always liked the way Weingartner noted the ending "... and the magnificent piece ends in one glorious shout of joy." I do not think the satisfaction derived from a noble reading, a reading like this one for example, can be put into words. Some experiences are best mulled over, nourished but not talked about. Words are such futile things, when great music is the subject.

As a recording this set is excellent. There may be some who will complain at first of the reverberation behind the orchestra—the acoustical qualities of the hall, but in the long run I believe this augmented resonance will be appreciated. I cannot say that I dislike this quality in a recording, for it

supplies, in my estimation, an element of realism too often missing.

Comparison between this recording and Koussevitzky's shows Weingartner, in my opinion, to be the more reliable Beethovenian. Yet, I cannot deny that Koussevitzky's reading is also a notable one of this symphony. The Russian was more ingenious in selecting some of the breaks than Weingartner, particularly in the first movement, but since such problems are solved by familiarity, and are one of the definite ones that have to be encountered with every recording of this kind, condemnation is not implied.

—P. H. R.

\* \* \* \*

BERLIOZ: *Damnation of Faust—Rakoczy march, Presto and waltz, and Minuet of the will-o'-the wisps*; and HANDEL: *Concerto No. 12—Larghetto*; played by The Boston Symphony Orchestra, direction of Serge Koussevitzky. Two Victor discs, Nos. 14230, 14231, price \$4.00.

**L**A *Damnation de Faust* is in many respects the finest work of Berlioz, and at the same time it ranks as one of the best musical renderings of the *Faust* legend. The composer succeeded in making something more than a conventional stage-demon of his *Mephistopheles* and there is an old-time beauty about the music of *Faust and Marguerite*. Some of the sardonic humor of the score is found in the selections which make up this little suite.

According to his own account, Berlioz wrote the *Rakoczy march* just prior to a visit to Hungary. He had been advised that, in order to make a hit with the Hungarians, he should have a composition in their national idiom to perform for them. He went through a collection of Hungarian tunes which a friend had given him, and chose the theme which he has made so familiar to us. Later, when he came to write his *Faust*, the memory of his triumphs in Budapest was still with him, and he took the liberty of transplanting his first act to Hungary, in order that he might introduce into it this very successful march.

The *Menuet des follets* is a kind of serenade which *Mephistopheles* stages for *Marguerite*, and the *Waltz* is his way of representing to the sleeping *Faust* the beauties of *Marguerite*.

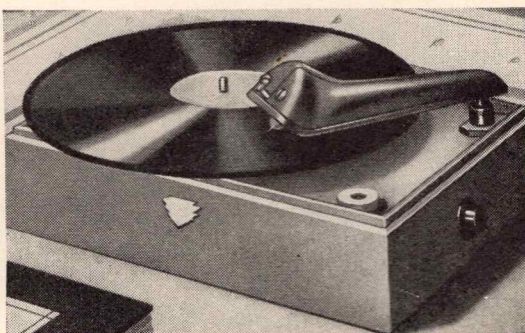
It was a foregone conclusion that Koussevitzky, a brilliant conductor of brilliant works, would be altogether happy in this





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# RECORDS



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music. There is a fine power and sweep to his *Rakoczy march*, great delicacy in his *Will-o-the-wisps* minuet and thrillingly beautiful string tone in the *Sylph-waltz*. The recording is sonorous and expansive. A new version of these pieces was badly wanted, but we need look no further.

When an odd side is needed, no composer is more reliable than good old Handel. No matter what music he follows, he is always supremely himself, and always welcome. The *Larghetto* from the twelfth of the *Grand concertos*, is one of those typical broad and melting movements, and the strings of the Boston Orchestra play it in fine style.

—P. M.

\* \* \* \*

BIZET: *L'Arlésienne* suite No. 2—*Menuet and Farandole*; played by the London Philharmonic Orchestra, direction of Sir Thomas Beecham. Columbia disc, No. 68882-D, price \$1.50.

AS a sort of encore to Beecham's recent recording of the *First Suite* from *L'Arlésienne* (not quite complete) Columbia now offers two selections from the *Second* under the same conductor. The music of *Suite No. 2* is quite as attractive as that of *No. 1*, and has the added merit of being less familiar. Each hearing strengthens the desire to hear this music in the setting for which it was conceived—as a background for Daudet's charming play.

The *Minuet* from the *suite* is as different as possible from the very famous one in the first. It is a fine example of economy in scoring, and shows unmistakably the hand of the composer of *Carmen*. Beginning as a duet between the flute and harp, the melody is gradually reinforced by horns, oboes and basses before the full orchestra takes up the strain. Then, quite as gradually, the orchestra thins out and the music dies away.

The *Farandole* is a more lively dance, introduced by the old *Noel* which forms the basis of the *Prelude*. Bizet plays with this tune in canon, and as a counterpoint to his more animated dance melody. The *Farandole* is often used in performances of *Carmen*, as part of the ballet.

Perhaps the quality above all others which makes the greatness of Sir Thomas Beecham is the feeling he imparts that the music he is directing is going somewhere. From the first note, one feels the inevitability of the last—and never has this been more striking than

in this music. In his hands the London Philharmonic is one of the great orchestras of the world, and the recording is worthy of the playing.

—P. M.

\* \* \* \*

BRUCKNER: *Symphony No. 4 in E flat major (Romantic)*; played by the Saxonian State Orchestra, direction Karl Bohm. Victor set M-331, eight discs, price \$16.00.

THERE is in Bruckner much to admire and enjoy, but the almost interminable length to which he carried out his music frequently defeats its purpose. Perhaps one should take him in divided doses, the first and second movements one time and the others at another time. In the case of the *Seventh Symphony*, this has been most advantageous in establishing respect and not a little appreciation among listeners whom we have entertained, and particularly so in the case of the first and second movements. As far as the *Scherzo* and the finale of the *Seventh* are concerned, we still think them inspirationally inferior to the other two movements.

Elsewhere in this issue appears a note on this work and upon Bruckner's scores in general. It tends to make us believe that new values in him are to be encountered in this recording. A single hearing of the work does not convince us of any striking new values, nor does it tend to make us revise previous opinions formed regarding Bruckner's music. Perhaps, after several re-hearings, and some study of the score, we shall revise our estimation of the composer, for there seems to be a good deal to admire in the present work. The article referred to informs us that the present version of the *Fourth* has not the emendations of his admirers, who would "make him sound like Wagner." Perhaps not, but we still note much of Wagner's spirit in evidence. Bruckner's admiration for Wagner was too assured, too strong, for him to rid himself entirely of the other man's influence.

Bruckner's *Fourth Symphony*, in the recording, takes 17 sides—you are supposed to replay side 10 for the repeat of the *Scherzo*. It's a long performance—an hour and a quarter! The first movement, which is perhaps the best of the symphony, occupies five sides, the last of which is a lengthy coda. The slow movement (none too convincing) takes four sides. The bucolic *Scherzo*, relatively short but good fun, occupies three sides; and the finale, massive in its proportions and some-



what Wagnerian in character, takes five sides. There is grandeur and meditation here, but not the kind that leaves you completely impressed.

The recording of this work is excellent. It is vital, full and rich with no over-amplification. Victor is to be congratulated on their early issuance of this set, which appeared only a couple of months ago in Europe. We feel certain that all Brucknerians will be gratified with this release, and will derive a great deal of pleasure from the music, for it represents the composer more truly than anything else on records to date.

—P. G.

\* \* \* \*

FRANCK: *Symphony in D minor*; played by the Philadelphia Orchestra, direction Leopold Stokowski. Victor set M-300, six discs, price \$12.00.

**F**EW conductors emphasize the burnished gold and purple shades of Franck's deep-hued harmonies and sensuous chromaticism as Stokowski does. Under his direction Franck's one and only symphony is a pageantry of tonal color and melodic lusciousness. Stokowski plays the work with a reverence that will undoubtedly please many who like it, yet for us his reading is molded with almost too much deliberation; particularly is this so in the second movement, which Stokowski conceives more as an *andante* than an *allegretto*. It has been said before and can be pertinently repeated here, that Stokowski lingers too excessively over many of the sentient melodies of this work. There is no denying that the plastic and majestic qualities of the music are set forth in an imposing manner, for under Stokowski the Philadelphia Orchestra plays with incomparable tonal beauty. Where do we hear strings so rich, so silken smooth, and where indeed such lustrous solo woodwinds?

It is difficult to believe that audiences found this symphony unattractive in the beginning. Much has happened to educate public taste in the last half-century, and Franck's symphony, only three years younger, in that time has become such a prime favorite that already its chromaticism, its cyclical form, its aspiring sentiment, begin to pall. And no matter how much it is played or admired few will refute the fact that the work is dated.

That the symphony owns beauty we will not deny. Vincent d'Indy, one of France's most patrician composers, has emphasized that in his book on Franck. This symphony, he says, "is a continual ascent towards pure gladness and life-giving light, because its workmanship is solid and its themes are manifestations of ideal beauty. What is there more joyous, more sanely vital, than the principle subject of the finale, around which all the other themes in the work cluster and crystallize? While in the higher registers all is dominated by that motive which M. Ropartz has justly called his (Franck's) theme of faith?"

The fervor and exaltation of the finale cannot be denied, and certainly not as Stokowski plays it here, but the "sane vitality" of the principal subject of the finale is open to some question. Can the dreamer, which Franck was and which d'Indy admits him to have been, be "sanely vital" like sunlight, for example, or rushing waters in mountain streams, or the exalted eminence of mountain peaks, or the irrefutable demonstration of a scientific fact? The fervor and enthusiasm that was Franck's was inspired in shadowed recesses, by filtered light through stained glass, leaden panes. Its rationality is based



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on mysticism, its vitality like its sentiment belongs to a devotional order.

M. Hughes Imbert, the eminent French music critic and *littérateur* has stated that Franck "was like an artist of another age, traversing the ordinary paths of life like a dreamer, unconscious of what might be passing around him, and living for his art alone, and for the few disciples who were destined to be the apostles of a new religion . . . he lived apart from mortals in a superterrestrial world . . ." It is the realization of this which permits us to understand why Franck's music satisfies so many and why it has ceased to appeal to others; for its substantialness, is actuality, cannot be attested in ordinary terms but only in the aspirations of the mystic dreamer.

Franck's symphony, because of its wide popularity, deserves this new recording, which is splendidly realized from the mechanical side. There is no question that this set outmodes Wolff's more vigorous and robust reading, and also Gaubert's less ambitious musicianly interpretation, both of which occupy fewer sides than does the present recording.

Mr. Stokowski's transcription of Franck's sentimental, quasi-religious composition *Paris Angelicus* is well enough made, but why the distinguished conductor chose this as a filler-in we cannot imagine, for, after the symphony, it is both anti-climactic and lacking in essential dignity.

—P. H. R.

\* \* \* \*

SIBELIUS: *Symphony No. 5 in E flat major, Opus 82; Pohjola's Daughter; and Tapiola*, played by the London Symphony Orchestra, direction Robert Kajanus. Victor set M-333, seven discs, price \$10.50.

THIS is the *First Volume* of the *Sibelius Society* which was released in 1932. Victor once brought it forth in this country, but never officially added it to their catalog. Innumerable requests are responsible for this re-issue.

After his austere *Fourth Symphony*, Sibelius relaxed in the creation of his *Fifth*, and brought forth a work not only more lyrical but more accessible to the general music listener. In fact this *Fifth Symphony* could be termed almost popular.

The tone poem *Pohjola's Daughter* is a work which came between Sibelius' *Second Symphony* and his *Violin Concerto*. It is definitely program music and is founded upon incidents taken from Cantos 8 and 9 of the ancient Finnish epic the *Kalevala*. The story, outlined fully in Mr. Ernest Newman's excellent booklet which accompanies the records, need not be retold here. Suffice to say, the music is purely descriptive and therefore not of great import.

*Tapiola* dates from 1926. It is Sibelius' *opus* 112. There is no program here, but an implication of the source of Sibelius' inspiration is given in the four line stanza which is prefixed to the score:

Wide-spread they stand, the Northland's dusky  
forests,  
Ancient, mysterious, brooding savage dreams;  
Within them dwells the Forest's mighty God,  
And wood-sprites in the gloom weave magic  
secrets.

The ancient forest god of Finland was known as Tapio. This is one of Sibelius' strongest scores, a work in which his magnificent ability to speak eloquently and impassionedly through the brasses of the orchestra is strikingly set forth. ". . . Brooding savage dreams," how truly and forcefully this thought is borne home, and the mystery and lineage of the forest depths is superbly suggested, nay truly attested. This music entralls, its strength is adamant, its essentiality unassailable; and yet, curiously enough, it is not Sibelius at his greatest.

The late Robert Kajanus, conductor of the Helsingfors symphony society, was Sibelius' choice of a conductor for his music. His attributes have been set forth before, and therefore hardly need outlining here. Under his understanding and appreciative direction the three works are worthily performed. The recording here is good. I would be inclined to recommend some treble compensation in order to create a similiar illusion to that engendered by so-called higher-fidelity recordings.

The phonophile who passes this set up, because he deems its period of recording ineffectual, is cutting his nose off to spite his face, for the music is unlikely to be recorded very soon again.

—P. H. R.



VERDI: *Aida, Ballet Suite*; played by the Boston "Pops" Orchestra, direction of Arthur Fiedler. Victor disc No. 11985, price \$1.50.

MR. Fiedler attests his fine musicianship in everything he essays. This music needs no endorsement. Those who admire it, however, should be introduced to this recording, which is a most desirable one.

—P. H. R.

## CONCERTO

AVSHALOMOFF: *Concerto in G, on Chinese Themes and Rhythms*, for piano and orchestra; played by Gregory Singer and Shanghai Municipal Orchestra, direction of the composer. Columbia set No. 286, four discs, price \$6.00.

MUSIC like this is apt to mean little to those unfamiliar with the exotic rhythms and tonalities of the Orient; few people can appreciate the problems the composer sets out to solve when he utilizes oriental material. Divorced from its own settings and poured into occidental molds, oriental music is very apt to seem tawdry and uneventful, and its themes sound meaningless and artificial. Such music at best is not genuine, and despite the origin of its material it must be considered from occidental standards and judged according to the intrinsic value of its content. The present concerto, at first hearing, strikes one as a hybrid, but after several re-hearings one begins to understand what the composer has set out to do and the manner in which he has accomplished it. The work is well enough made — Avshalomoff is, if nothing else, an able craftsman — and the opening and closing movements possess the praiseworthy qualities of brilliance and alertness, but it cannot be honestly said that the material is either compelling or of great import. Influences are noticeable, particularly from the modern Russian and French schools — and, in the cadenza of the first movement, a striking parallelism to Debussy's *Engulfed Cathedral* is encountered. In the quasi-oriental mood of the *Adagio*, the composer has employed Chinese instruments, creating effects that are indeed novel. The work as a matter of fact belongs definitely in the class of novelties. Its performance, under the direction of the composer, is realistically realized, and the recording is vital and well-balanced.



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Avshalomoff, born in Siberia, was brought up in oriental Russia. As a child, we are told, he became acquainted with the characteristics of Chinese music after hearing it played on the streets in the Chinese colony of his native town. Later, he went to Peiping, China, where he studied music. He has written several symphonic poems, a ballet, an opera and numerous songs. His musical activities have been mostly confined to China, where the present recording was made this past year.

It is safe to say that those who enjoyed Mr. Lapham's quasi-oriental concerto on Japanese themes will likewise enjoy this more ambitious work.

—P. H. R.

## CHAMBER MUSIC

DEBUSSY: *Sonata No. 3, for violin and piano*; and L'ABBE: *Aria, Chasse and Minuetto*, played by Alfred Dubois, violin, and Marcel Maas, piano. Columbia Set X-44, two discs, price \$3.00.

Toward the end of his life, Debussy set himself to compose a series of six *Sonatas* for various instruments; and of these he completed three. The first, for cello and piano, is already in the Columbia catalogue, and the second, for flute, harp and viola, is available in two importations. No. 3 for violin and piano, has an especial, if melancholy, interest, because the occasion of its premiere, May 5, 1917, when the composer played the work with the violinist, Poulet, was Debussy's last public appearance.

The *Violin sonata* is a controversial work. But whether we feel with Leon Vallas that it shows a definitely failing inspiration, or with Edwin Evans, who considers it superior to the *Cello sonata*—whether, indeed, we find it a success or a failure, the work cannot but interest the student, if only because of what it attempts to do.

In spite of the use of a "motto" theme to introduce the first and last movements, the *Sonata* is extremely free, and gives little impression of formal unity. Debussy remains the experimentalist to the end, and in this work he plays with various sounds and colors. He seems to conceive this music sectionally rather than as a whole; and, after listening to the work, one retains an impression, however charming, of this or that lovely passage rather than of the entire *Sonata*. The work

lies somewhere between the *Sonatas* of Fauré and those of Delius, wandering further in the paths of freedom than the former, and lacking the continuity which holds the latter's work together.

This *Sonata* made one of the now aging Thibaud-Cortot series of recordings which, unfortunately, is being now neither replaced nor added to. Dubois and Maas today are as active a team as their illustrious compatriots once were, and they succeed handsomely in presenting a satisfactory up-to-date version. Temperamentally they seem more nearly matched than Thibaud and Cortot, whose success as duetists was based upon a fusing of contrasting personalities. Aside from a moment of uncertainty in the higher reaches of the violin part, this performance is a completely successful one.

The *Sonata* is short, taking only three sides, and the artists give us an interesting contrast in their choice of a filler. The three movements are taken from the *Sonata in D, Op. 1, No. 1*, of Joseph Barnabé Saint-Servain (1727-1787) who was known as L'Abbé, after his father and uncle, who had been church musicians and required to wear the clerical dress. There is considerable freshness and grace in the little *Aria*, and the *Chasse* and *Minuetto* provide a pleasant departure from the usual violin repertoire. The artists are quite at home in this unassuming music.

—P. M.

\* \* \* \*

MENDELSSOHN: *Canzonetta* from *String Quartet No. 1 in E flat*, and *Scherzo* from *String Quartet No. 4 in E minor*; played by the Lener Quartet. Columbia disc No. 68880, price \$1.50.

EXCERPTS from string quartets are rare today. Generally we get the whole work, which, because our appreciation has grown in stature since the advent of electrical recording, we rightfully deserve.

Mendelssohn is sadly neglected nowadays, and yet he has no rival in music like this *Scherzo*, which belongs to his fourth quartet. Here we have another example of that elfin type of music which Mendelssohn brought forth in his *Midsummer Night's Dream Overture*, a style of writing which he made his very own. The *Canzonetta* is that exquisitely molded minuet from his first quartet, which Cobbett has termed "a pearl of musical litera-



ture;" and which the Budapest Quartet recorded complete not so long ago.

These two aspects of Mendelssohn's string quartet writing are worthy examples of the composer's artistry. They are played by the Leners with their accustomed polish and precision. Recording here is clear and well-balanced.

—P. G.

## HARPSICHORD

C. P. E. BACH: *Solfeggio in E flat major; Alla Polacca; Solfeggio in C minor; Largo in E major; Fantasia in D major; Fantasia in G major*; played by Yella Pessl. Columbia ten-inch disc, No. 17081-D, price \$1.00.

THESE six miniatures present an aspect of one of the most famous sons of the great Johann Sebastian which is entirely new to the phonograph. As a matter of fact this composer is very poorly represented at best—the only major work recorded being of rather doubtful origin.

Of the pieces which Miss Pessl plays, only one is familiar. Many a young piano student has cut a tooth or two on the *C minor Solfeggio*, but the other five will come as a most welcome novelty. All six can be found in Volume 65 of Nagel's *Musik-Archiv*, which is a collection of short keyboard sketches by this particular Bach.

There is a surprising amount of variety in this little selection. The *E flat Solfeggio* is a study in the playing of the turn—a sort of brief *prelude* ending in a flashing *cadenza*. The *Polacca* is somewhat more extended, and crowds a lot of contrast into its brief duration. Of the *C minor Solfeggio* it is only necessary to say that it takes on a new color when played on the harpsichord. The weightiest of the six pieces is the rich and dignified *Largo* with which the second side opens. The two *Fantasias* are more brilliant. Quite aside from their very considerable historic interest, these unpretentious pieces cast a musical spell which grows with repeated hearings. And they serve perhaps better than any of the other recorded works of Carl Philipp Emanuel to show how far he drifted from the ways of his father.

Once again we have to thank Miss Pessl and the Columbia engineers for giving us unusual music, skillfully played and recorded with great fullness and clarity. One might quarrel with the artist for making so big a

*ritard* at the end of the *C minor Solfeggio*, but this is a minor detail. Otherwise the record is well up to the Pessl standard.

—P. M.

\* \* \* \*

BACH: *Partita No. 5 in G major*; played on the harpichord by Ralph Kirkpatrick. Musicraft discs, nos. 1004-5, price \$3.00.

AFTER his appointment to Leipzig in 1723, Bach occupied himself chiefly with church music. Finding Leipzig's early attitude somewhat cold toward him and aware that his predecessor Kuhnau was greatly admired for his keyboard compositions, particularly his *Neue Clavier-Uebung* containing a set of *Partitas*, Bach determined to compete with Kuhnau in his own territory. Accordingly in 1726, he published his first partita, and subsequently each year he brought forth another until in 1731 he issued his six partitas as *Part One* of his *Clavier Diversions*.

The *Partitas*, written unquestionably to satisfy public taste, are of less weight than the *English Suites*; but this does not mean that they are lacking in inspiration. Their buoyancy and sparkle make them congenial companions, and when they are played on

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MOZART: Quartet in B flat (K-589). Played by the Perole String Quartet.

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the harpsichord there is an added charm to their old-world characteristics which is particularly ingratiating.

The *Fifth Partita* in *G major* is heard less often than the *First* in *B flat major* and the *Second* in *C minor*. It is a bright, cheerful work with a *Préambule* for its initial movement, and a group of six dances including an *Allemande*, *Courante*, *Sarabande*, *Minuetto*, *Passepied* and *Gigue*.

Although Ralph Kirkpatrick plays this work with his usual admirable technical skill, his performance is at the same time somewhat lacking in rhythmic flexibility. The delicacy of Mr. Kirkpatrick's harpsichord tone may have something to do with this and so too may the recording, which is good but uneven in its volume levels.

—P. H. R.

## PIANO

BRAHMS: *Variations on an Original Theme*, Opus 21, No. 1, played by William Bachaus, piano, Victor disc, 12 inch, No. 14227, Price \$2.00.

A typical characteristic of the composers representing the North German School is their love for the Variation-form. Brahms was in this case, an extraordinarily prolific parent, as witness his creations in this field: *Variations on a Theme by Schumann*, two sets of *Original Variations* (one of which is under consideration at this writing), *Variations on a Theme by Handel*, *Variations on an Hungarian Theme*, *Variations on a Theme by Haydn* etc. According to Niemann: "Variations and songs in strophic form (*Strophenglieder*) were his first and most important test for rising young composers, and Beethoven's variations were the unsurpassed model for all others." There are also several pertinent remarks, which Brahms often repeated for the benefit of certain composers whose ramblings in the variation-territory covered entirely too much ground within one hour. "The fewer the variations, the better" (a declaration which Brahms immediately proceeds to disregard); "but they must say all that is to be said." In this Brahms was as rigorous a devotee as was Brother Justine in repeating his catechism every morning. Or: "Few themes are suitable. They must always keep their aim firmly in view, and this is only possible if the bass is

firmly established; otherwise they are left hanging in the air. Then straight ahead towards your goal, without beating about the bush." In other words, "The bass is more important than the melody."

There are two sets of *Variations* to Opus 21. Niemann complains of their neglect by instrumentalists, attributing it chiefly to the "lack of initiative among our pianists, the great majority of whom unfortunately confine themselves for life to performing the few important stock pieces which they learnt at their college of music." But closer examination will disclose another case for this neglect: "these two sets of variations are not only among the harshest of Brahms's creations, but also among those in which the constructive and analytical intelligence says the last word." Perhaps having said the last word, like the proverbial shrew, may have something to do with their infrequent performance. The same writer finds that the youthfulness of Brahms is most apparent in the agitated passages, what he calls "vehement and discontented revolt." The fourth variation has an ecclesiastical quality and is reminiscent of Bach.

There is no need to argue with the peculiar style of Bachaus' playing. Some may like it and some may not. It depends on what the listener expects from a pianist: if he likes the brilliant high-lights of a Cortot, the clean-cut etching of a Horowitz, the sharply defined poetry of a Gieseeking, Bachaus might prove disappointing. For brilliance is not the most outstanding characteristic of his playing. There is feeling and understanding, to be sure; there is, also, poetry which fits in with the sultry moods of Brahms; but sharp, decisive brilliance is missing.

The recording is, of course, ample in range. The piano tone emerges with verity, and the performance, on records, is a favorable one.

—W. K.

(This work has an especial interest for American listeners. The theme upon which Brahms has based his 11 variations has a curious resemblance to the opening phrase of the popular American ballad *A Perfect Day*. Perhaps Mrs. Bond found her inspiration for her sentimental effusion in Brahms' more austere and scholarly melody. The Editor.)



## VIOLIN

**PAGANINI:** *Caprice No. 1 in A minor*; and **NOVACEK:** *Moto perpetuum*; played by Guila Bustabo with Gerald Moore at the piano in the Novacek composition. Columbia disc No. 17082, 10 inch, price \$1.00.

**A**N unaccompanied *Caprice* by Paganini and an exercise in speed and technical skill introduce us to the artistry of youthful Guila Bustabo, who has been widely acclaimed in Europe and this country. Because she is a fine technician and a sensitive musician, we would like to hear her in music of more consequence. The recording here is good.

—P. G.

\* \* \* \*

**PAGANINI:** *Caprice in G Minor, Opus 1, No. 6*, with piano part by Enesco, played by Yehudi Menuhin, violin, George Enesco, piano; *Caprice in E Major, Opus 1, No. 9*, played by Menuhin, unaccompanied. Victor, 12 inch, No. 14228, Price \$2.00.

**T**HERE is no denying that the *Caprice in G Minor*, arranged with piano by George Enesco, is an extremely difficult piece of music. For the violinist, especially, it is a perspiring ordeal; for the present listener, it was nerve-racking. One can marvel at Menuhin's prodigious technique, his ability to keep trilling while a melody sneaks in and out; but to listen to it — with its ample stretches on the strings, its broken chords, *etcetra* — is hardly a musically satisfying experience. There are moments when it seems that Menuhin is out of tune; moments when the playing strikes us as being pretty bad — but, unless we understand the hazardous difficulties involved in this *Caprice*, we will tend to dismiss this as one of the young man's off days; put the disc away in our album and forget all about it, with no loss to ourselves or to the young talented violinist.

The truth of the matter is, however, that being so difficult, the piece is no more than a pyrotechnical exhibition, and for better or worse, we must accept it as such. It is music in no sense of the word. We may listen to it, even in admiration, marvel at Menuhin's amazing stretches, but when the disc has come to an end, all that we will recall, substantially, will be yawling tonalities and a recurrent shake in our ears.

The *Caprice in E Major* is played by Menuhin unaccompanied. This is a far more

satisfying piece of music, one written with care and deliberation by the erratic Paganini, and it is played with all the magnificent brilliance at the young violinist's disposal. The first piece is nothing more than a harrowing exercise and the second a fine piece of musical composition. This *Caprice* has also been transcribed by Liszt in his volume of *Transcendental Etudes* for the piano.

The recording and playing are both equally fine.

—W. K.

## ORATORIO

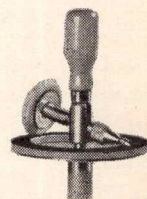
**HANDEL:** *The Messiah (Oratorio)*. Conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham with unnamed orchestra, B. B. C. Choir, Dora Labette, Muriel Brunskill, Hubert Eisdell and Harold Williams. Columbia set No. 271, 18 discs, price \$27.00.

**F**OUR years more and the musical world can celebrate the bicentenary of *The Messiah*. When and if that event comes about, we dare say that its leader will be Sir Thomas Beecham, for he seems to be one of the foremost champions of this, the greatest oratorio ever written.

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This recording was brought forward in England in January, 1928. Sir Thomas' performance of this work, a short time previous to the recording, had stirred considerable controversy and debate, hence the recording. Dissatisfied with the traditional manner of presenting this score, Sir Thomas sought to renovate his production, to make it more vital, more rhythmically alive, less oppressive and formal. The validity of his conception seems to be affirmed by the fact that the public yearly acclaims Sir Thomas' reading of *The Messiah* in an annual Christmas performance.

The present version of *The Messiah* is not a complete recording, but a goodly section of it; as a matter of fact only a few of its numbers are missing, and the most important of these, the *Pastoral Symphony* and the magnificent *Amen Chorus*, can fortunately be procured on records — and in the case of the first named conducted by no other than Sir Thomas (Columbia disc 7189-M). The feature of this set remains, as in the recent fourth act of *La Boheme*, the work of Sir Thomas, whose sharpened outlines and healthy ruggedness are particularly praiseworthy qualities. If anyone thinks that this recording is definitely outdated, I bid them hear it on a higher-fidelity outfit, with some treble compensation, and I feel certain they will endorse it heartily.

Thirty years ago a performance of *The Messiah* would have had greater soloists than the four Sir Thomas selected for this performance, but this does not necessarily imply that those engaged here are lacking in sound qualities. At the time of the album's release it was pointed out that the best singing and understanding of the score was to be found in the contralto and the bass, Muriel Brunskill and Harold Williams. Dora Labette, who chooses to be called Lisa Perli in the *Boheme* set, is the soprano soloist. If I recall correctly, the late Herman Klein felt she lacked variety of color here. The tenor, Hubert Eisdell, is not an Evan Williams, and this we can lament, for the tenor part has several imposing solos. The chorus, the B. B. C. Choir, is good, but not outstanding. Apparently this organization has grown in stature in the past ten years, for the same choir sings much better, or shall I say gives a better account of themselves, today than they did when these records were made. But all things being equal, this recording has its merits, and

they are sufficiently imposing to merit its belated release in this country.

—P. H. R.

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## FRIENDS OF RECORDED MUSIC

GRIFFES: *An Indian sketch*, played by the Kreiner Quartet; and *The Lament of Ian the Proud*, sung by William Hain, with Jerome T. Bohm at the piano. The Friends of Recorded Music, one disc, No. 5.

SINCE *The Friends of Recorded Music* is an American organization devoted to the presentation of unusual music performed by American artists, it is particularly appropriate that an early release should be devoted to the works of one of the finest and last appreciated of our composers. It is surely unnecessary, at this date, to indulge in futile lamentations over the untimely death of Charles Tomlinson Griffes, who, had he lived, might easily have taken his place among the greatest names in music. Like MacDowell, he had an uncommon talent which seemed destined to blossom into genius. The works he did leave us form in themselves a heritage of which we may well be proud; and the two short samples here recorded will stand up with the best art of their time.

Of the two *Indian Sketches* for string quartet, the first is certainly the more important and it is this one which the Kreiner Quartet has played for us. Based on a Chippewa *Song of Farewell*, it is a sincere, straightforward and moving work—one of the best produced by the post-Dvorak wave of Indian and Negro atmosphere. The Kreiners play this music with their wonted skill and with evident affection, and the recording is the best yet done by the *Friends*.

*The Lament of Ian the Proud* is the first of the three songs which make up Op. 11; and beyond any question it belongs with the greatest songs in the English language. There is a stark beauty about the verses of Fiona MacLeod which Griffes has caught in his music with great simplicity and naturalness. The piano part is descriptive without overshadowing the voice. Mr. Hain makes a most auspicious debut in this magnificent song, showing himself an artist of rare sensitiveness and musicianship. Rarely does a tenor combine so robust a quality with a lyric style and irreproachable diction. His pronouncement of the final line—"crying to me, who am old and blind"—is memorable. The accompaniment is played by the well-known critic, Jerome T.



Bohm, whose first reputation was made in this capacity. He gives the singer admirable collaboration, though he might, perhaps, have been recorded a bit more strongly. Mr. Hain's voice records superbly.

—P. M.

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MARX: *Der Rauch*; *Lieder*; and *In meiner Träume Heimat*, sung by Paul Engel, baritone, with Jerome T. Bohm at the piano. The Friends of Recorded Music, one disc, No. 6.

WITH this offering *The Friends of Recorded Music* call attention to an important contemporary composer who has so far been generally overlooked by the companies. One of the most distinguished of latter day German *Lieder* writers. Joseph Marx is not infrequently represented on recital programs; but only one recorded example has found its way to the American lists. The present disc is particularly interesting in its selections, as the one side presents the Marx of 1910, the period of his best-known *Lieder*, and the other brings us two songs in his 1936 manner, showing that the composer has kept abreast of the times without ever degenerating into a mere dabbler in sounds. Always notable for his expressive setting of words, Marx is today, as he was in 1910, essentially a modern.

*Der Rauch* is a song of exquisite beauty. "They are burning the old grape vine which produced the wines of past years: now, haunted with memories, even the smoke is beautiful." Surely this is a striking idea, and the poem of Rudolf Hans Bartsch is full of tender but unexaggerated feeling. The subtlety of the Marx setting may be illustrated by quoting one line—"O blauer umrollender Wolkenrauch"—in which passage the upward curling of smoke is depicted in the vocal line.

*Lieder* is a panegyric on song, and *In meiner Traeume Heimat* is a song of introspection. The piano parts of these two songs are more elaborate than that of *Der Rauch*—perhaps more Marxian. The rhapsodic prelude and postlude of the former are very typical.

Paul Engel, who sings the songs, has an ample baritone voice, somewhat reminiscent in quality of that of Royal Dadmun. Unfortunately it is not too freely produced, and, though he sings with taste, the impression he gives is one of feeling rather than communication. Jerome T. Bohm at the piano provides musicianly accompaniments.

—P. M.



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## VOCAL

KOWALSKI: *Pierrot Lunaire*, Op. 4 (twelve songs); sung by Ernst Wolff, baritone, accompanying himself at the piano. Columbia set 278, three discs, price \$5.00.

THE *Pierrot Lunaire* of the Belgian poet, Albert Giraud, was translated into German by Otto von Hartleben, and has attracted such widely differing composers as Arnold Schönberg and Joseph Marx. Here we have twelve of the poems set in a manner less radical than that of Schönberg by a composer whose name is scarcely known in this country. Max Kowalski is a lawyer by profession, though he has found time to make a name for himself as a musician of unusual gifts.

Kowalski has been likened to Robert Franz, because, having laid a solid musical foundation at Dr. Hoch's Konservatorium in his native Frankfort, he has been content to run his own course, uninfluenced by the activities of his contemporaries, expressing his ideas simply and naturally. Again like Franz, he has devoted almost all his musical activities to the *Lied* form and he understands the function of music in the expression of a poetic idea. Because he is gifted with an exceptional baritone voice, his effects are always vocal, though he never fails to let the text tell its story. It is true, however, that the irony, fantasy and bizarre wit of these *Pierrot Lunaire Lieder* are totally foreign to the art of Robert Franz.

Kowalski was born August 10, 1882, and has spent most of his life in Frankfort. The *Pierrot Lunaire* songs were published in 1913. His most ambitious work to date is a burlesque opera, *Till Eulenspiegel*, which was given with some success in Cologne, in 1925.

The twelve songs which comprise the cycle are mood pictures of the moonstruck *Pierrot*. Through his joy and his sorrow, the moon is ever with him, and she casts her pale light upon the music of the songs. The tone changes with each contrasting scene, but two things are present throughout the cycle—the moon and the individual touch of the composer. As has been said, Kowalski has a real feeling for words, but at the same time he says much in the piano parts. The interludes in *Raub*, the figure in the accompaniment of *Die Estrade* and the passage descriptive of rubbing in *Der Mondfleck* are cases in point. Then too, there are skillful touches in several of the postludes—for instance the sudden change at the end of *Colombine*.

Ernst Wolff, whose repertoire is surely the least hackneyed of any recording singer, as a friend of the composer, is particularly well qualified to sing these songs. His voice shows the effects of study since his earlier records were made, and he has lost nothing of his fine musicianship, his enthusiasm, or the perfect diction and feeling for songs which have been so much admired. Though one hesitates to use the word "vehicle" in connection with art songs, the fact is inescapable that these songs are more "grateful" than others which he has given us. They have not the intimacy of the Franz and Erich Wolff *Lieder*, or even of the Synagogue chants which Mr. Wolff has recorded. Their demands are less subtle, and the singer is given a chance to paint with broader strokes—an opportunity which he does not miss.

Here and there the order of the songs has been changed, though I am not able to say whether this was done to make them fit on the six record sides, or for any especially artistic reason. However, the original numbers are carefully given on the record labels as well as in the booklet. Also there are a few low notes in the printed music which have been altered without doing violence to the work. The recording is the best which has yet been made of this artist.

—P. M.

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MASSNET: *Le Cid*; *O Noble Lame Etnicelante*, and *O Souverain! O Juge! O Pere*, sung by Georges Thill, with orchestra conducted by E. Bigot. Columbia 9124-M, price \$1.50.

THIS reviewer has been consistently enthusiastic over each of the recent recordings Georges Thill has made, and these two *Cid* airs must elicit the same praise. Thill has the gift to make any aria of the moment sound like profound music, and right now Massenet stands pretty high in our favor. The salient characteristics of Thill's records are a burning intensity of expression, a rhythmic verve, accuracy, and a virile, true, and well controlled voice.

The Act I, Sc. 2 aria occurs in the gallery of the King's palace that leads to the Burgos Cathedral. Rodrigue, later to be known as El Cid, the Conqueror, nobly addresses his sword, and pledges to employ it only in a just cause for the honor and glory of Spain, her liberty, and her Saint, James of Compostella. Then in a state of ecstasy he beholds Chimene, and knows instantly that henceforth



his life must be united to hers. Massenet gives us stirring patriotic music, and effectively introduces, when we first see Chimene, music that she later repeats in her great aria *Pleurez, pleurez mes yeux*.

*O Souverain* occurs in the scene at Rodrigue's tent (Act III, Sc. 3) when the hero's fortunes are at their lowest ebb. His hopes are gone, but still he can feel a complete devotion to the Lord, and pray for the forgiveness of his own faults and beg the Lords merciful protection for Chimene. Many of us know this music well from Caruso's superb record. Thill, as all other tenors, can not even approximate the beauty of Caruso's voice, but he has an equal conviction in his singing, a finer French style, and a brilliantly played and recorded accompaniment that adds greatly to the sweep of the music. He sings the aria in the difficult original high key of *A flat* without any evidence of effort, which is a feat in itself.

It is records such as this which constantly renew our love for recorded music. People everywhere can at any time hear this truly remarkable exhibition of artistic French singing, the like of which can not be found even in New York today.

—A. P. D.

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**PLAINSONG:** *The Royal Banners, O Blest Creator of the Stars of Night, and Sing, My Tongue;* sung by the Choir of St. Mary's Primrose Hill, conducted by J. H. Arnold. 10 inch Columbia 274-M, price \$1.00.

**EPISCOPAL** choir-masters should take particular interest in this record, for it shows how English plainsong should be sung. Four Office Hymns from the Episcopal Hymnal, all with translations of 6th and 7th century Latin hymns, are sung to the melodies from manuscript versions of the ancient Sarum (Salisbury) Antiphoner. There is spiritual peace in these smoothly flowing lines, sung so simply and sweetly by the boys and men of this London choir without any instrumental accompaniment; the variety in antiphonal singing dispels all monotony.

—A. P. D.

**QUILTER:** *Fear No More the Heat o' the Sun; Take, O Take Those Lips Away; and O Mistress Mine;* sung by Mark Raphael. 10 inch Columbia 275-M, price \$1.

**SEVERAL** months ago Mark Raphael gave us Roger Quilter's *It Was a Lover and His Lass*, and *Come Away Death*, and his cur-

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**BEETHOVEN:** Symphony No. 3, in E Flat, Op. 55 ("Eroica"). Felix Weingartner and the Vienna Philharmonica Orchestra. Set No. 285 and AM 285.

The "Eroica" symphony, in many respects the mightiest and most magnificent of Beethoven's nine, is well known to have been his own favorite. One need only say that the combination of Weingartner and The Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra has given us a new performance that bespeaks Beethoven's lofty ideas. Even Weingartner, arch-priest of Beethoven that he is, seems newly inspired in an album work that will stand as a model of interpretation and a masterpiece of recording. This set supersedes Columbia Set No. 138.

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**AVSHALOMOFF:** Concerto in G, For Piano and Orchestra (Upon Chinese Themes and Rhythms). Gregory Singer (pianist) and Shanghai Municipal Orchestra, conducted by the Composer. Set No. 286 and AM 286.

Avshalomoff was born in the town of Nikolaievsk Siberia, in 1894. As a child he became acquainted with Chinese music. The Concerto was composed in Shanghai during the Autumn of 1935 and first performed in January of 1936 by the same artists presented in this recording. The composer has moulded Chinese themes and rhythms into symphonic form and developed these themes in the classic pattern. Here is an "American Premiere" of a new work and a new composer.

•

**KOWALSKI:** Pierrot Lunaire (Twelve Poems) (Sung in German). Ernst Wolff (Bari-tone) Accompanying Himself at the Piano — Set No. 287.

Max Kowalski, a German composer, was born August 10th, 1882, and is a lawyer by profession. Kowalski is known chiefly as the composer of numerous *Lieder*. His greatest success has been made with the twelve "Pierrotlieder". The verses have a unique charm. This is a crowning achievement for Ernst Wolff as he seems perfectly at ease in these intricate and dramatic songs, rendering them with an authority that will thrill all. Wolff accompanies himself and such complete co-ordination between voice and piano cannot be surpassed.

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rent disc presents three more of the Shakespeare songs. In each of these Quilter has produced musical settings of delicacy and refinement which worthily match the meaning and mood, as well as the mere verbal meter of the lyrics. *Fear No More* (Cymbeline IV, 2) is a wise, tender, and melancholy dirge. *Take, O Take Those Lips Away* (the boy's song at the beginning of *Measure for Measure*, Act IV) is a love song with a tinge of wistfulness. *O Mistress Mine* (Twelfth Night II, 3) is the lover's playful and eternal suing of the mistress to make the most of her time.

Mark Raphael's light baritone has no distinguished quality, but it pleases because the singer carefully captures the intent of each song. Quilter is said to have chosen him to sing his songs in recording. The composer plays the piano accompaniments, and is aided by strings in one number. The recording is good.

—A. P. D.

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SUPPE: *Gems from Boccaccio*, sung by Anni Frind, Walther Ludwig and Wilhelm Strienz, with chorus and orchestra, direction of Bruno Seidler-Winkler. Victor disc, No. 36195, price \$1.25.

OLD timers will recall the days when everyone had a number of records of "gems" from his favorite operas. This old idea seems to have been revived in a big way in Germany of late. Aside from the language, the main difference between the old American and the new German recordings is that the German singers are given label credit. Though the Victor Opera Company had some well-known members, they remained anonymous, and it was left to the listener to recognize his favorites. Anni Frind, Walther Ludwig and Wilhelm Strienz are names of some reputation abroad, and they lend distinction to this potpourri of airs from the ever-popular Suppé operatta. Bruno Seidler-Winkler, the veteran whose recordings must at one time have been as numerous as those of the indefatigable Carlo Sabajno, has recently returned to the fold, apparently as prolific as ever. Under his direction the soloists, chorus and orchestra give an altogether adequate performance of this very Viennese music.

—P. M.

*Le Tango des Filles*; and *L'Hotel du Clair de Lune*; sung by Lucienne Boyer, with Iza Volpin's orchestra. Columbia 276-M, price \$1.00.

BOYER'S songs and style remain true to type. The first number is a sad little tango about the *filles* of the dance-hall, objects of any man's affections; the girls must bravely smile through their tears. The second song praises the *al fresco* hotel, closed by day and open by night, with its soft moss, its skies, and moonlight, where lovers pay only in kisses.

The recording is not too good.

A. P. D.

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DVORAK: *Songs My Mother Taught Me*, and TOURS: *Mother O' Mine*, sung by Richard Crooks, with Frederick Schauwecker at the piano. 10 in. Victor, 1806, price \$1.50.

These songs are frankly sentimental mother songs, and Crooks sings them with unashamed sentiment but without mawkishness or cheapness. The voice has a body of fine texture, the diction is uncommonly crisp, and each song emerges with style. The Dvorak is taken deliberately, the long phrases easily sustained; the Tours setting of the Kipling lyric is sung with honest conviction, which is just about all that is required. The accompaniments and the recording are excellent.

—A. P. D.

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LAZZO: *Echoliéd*, and MENDELSSOHN: *Die Nachtigall*, sung by the Dresdner Kreuzchor, directed by Rudolf Mauersberger. 10 in. Victor, 4326, price \$1.00.

THE Dresdner Kreuzchor offers two well recorded examples of secular choral works. Orlando di Lasso's *Echo Song* is a *villanelle* for double chorus. The words have the senseless badinage that we could expect in a dialogue between a singer and Echo. The text is in German. The music is light and swift, and the singing of the split choir is sure and moves lightly.

*Die Nachtigall*, the text a stanza by Goethe, is one of Mendelssohn's part-songs in Op. 59. The nightingale learns nothing new, but sings continually her old songs of love. The music is simple and melodious, and the choir sings it graciously.

—A. P. D.

(Continued on Page 396)



# Record Collector's Corner

By JULIAN MORTON MOSES

**S**O many inquiries have reached me of late concerning the aliases supposedly assumed by great singers of the past in presenting their recorded output to the world that it would almost appear these rumors were deliberately manufactured. Now it may be true that a recording company, having paid for a famous name, was reluctant to capitalize on its known drawing power to sell the records made by its possessor. It also lies, perhaps, within the realm of possibility that, confronted with an inferior representation of a given artist's work, the sales agents contrived to conceal identities, believing that the music buying public would be more susceptible to bad work on the part of someone they did not know than someone they revered. Finally, it is quite likely that Messrs. Johnson, Edison, Michaelis and their competitors engaged time and money in a business only to provide esoteric amusement and confusion for a succeeding generation. I don't believe any of it.

If JEAN DE RESKE had made or permitted the release of the records he was listed as being ready to make, according to the 1905 announcements of the *Societa Italiana di Fonotipia*, they would have borne his name, probably in red capitals embossed with gold. If P. A. Asselin's *Edison Royal Purple* cylinders are really the work of GIUSEPPE ANSELMI, then the first mentioned Canadian tenor lent his name with most unusual altruism, and the latter Italian favorite acquired with that name a French diction he had not commanded when appearing under his normally inherited cognomen. The name of EMILIO DE GOGORZA, it is true, was supplanted by others less colorful but at a time, it must be remembered, when the original name had none of the fame it was later to enjoy. Suffice it to note that after 1906, no additions were made to lists of recordings by HERBERT GODDARD or SENOR FRANCISCO.

If record collecting is ever to achieve the understanding and interest on the part of the lay public that do the similar hobbies of books and stamps, and if it is going to figure

thereby in newspaper accounts, etc., all that is spurious will have to be eliminated and a rational, at present non-existent, outlook adopted. The basis for record values is, after all, reasonable enough not to need false booms. When legitimate, it is founded on three factors: demand, availability, condition. Certain records are wanted by everyone because of the music, the artist or the label. With what ease or difficulty these records may be obtained is dependent upon how long they were in the catalogue, whether they are still obtainable upon special order and what quantity of used copies are floating around. Finally, the importance of condition is the factor that distinguishes this from all like pursuits.

It will be seen that the above schedule does not include the personal element of one individual possessing a record which another must have at that very moment. If Jones pays James one million dollars under such circumstances, it cannot be called typical nor does it constitute a yardstick. Likewise, an

## THE AMERICAN RECORD COLLECTORS' ASSOCIATION

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Record Collectors desiring to dispose of rare cut-out recordings are invited to communicate with the Association.



astute piece of salesmanship may stimulate someone to pay heavily for a given record because it is Jenny Lind singing under the name of Lizpie Chantresmal (see above) or even because it is the seventh pressing of the seventh matrix made by the seventh son of a bituminous coal dealer. I should be the last to cry liar, if someone told me of twenty-five dollars being paid for the intricate design attained by twenty-five cracks on a record's surface, or its buyer's.

For discussion of such matters, it has been suggested that I call a strictly business meeting together in New York during the early part of April. At first well disposed toward the idea, I had in my mind changed by a close friend and genuine collector who convinced me that the trouble involved and the lack of cooperation I would surely experience might be damaging rather than helpful to the purpose I sincerely felt impelled to serve. However, if it is the opinion of the readers of this column that such discussion would be beneficial and if they would advise me as to the scope and direction of the talks, I would risk the danger, personal and otherwise, involved. But I must hear first from you.

It was a great shock to learn from Mr. P. G. Hurst that he is no longer associated with *The Gramophone*. During the six years he edited the "Collector's Corner" in that magazine, it represented an intelligence of outlook and a beauty of expression that made its monthly appearance a source of continual gratification. On behalf of Mr. Hurst, I am therefore privileged to insert a few lines addressed to his American readers "in grateful thanks for the particular and especial goodwill that I have so invariably received from them; and explain that my abrupt departure without a word to my readers is not due to a disregard for them."

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## RECORDED NOTES and REVIEWS

(Continued from Page 394)

GLUCK: *Orfeo, Che jaro*; and HANDEL: *Largo*; sung by Enid Szanthe, with orchestra conducted by Alexander Smallens. Victor 14229, price \$2.00.

**M**ME. Szanthe's *Lieder* on the January list aroused expectations for music of the kind she now attempts, but this record is a sore disappointment. The singer's fine vocal endowment is obvious, but no less obvious are her vagaries in the matter of style. These Handel and Gluck arias call for a breadth of

treatment, a depth of feeling, and a sense of form. Mme. Szanthe's singing is hurried and erratic, and Mr. Smallens' orchestra is jumpy and lacks true sonority. The careless work of the performers is unworthy of the good recording.

—A. P. D.

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STRAUSS: *Traum durch die Daemmerung*, and *Ich Schwebe*; and SCHUMANN: *Mondnacht*, sung by Elisabeth Schumann, with piano accompaniments by Karl Alwin. Victor 14076, price \$2.00.

**I**T is always a delight to hear Mme. Schumann sing Richard Strauss songs that she has so joyously and so whole-heartedly nurtured. With them she has rare familiarity, and a perfect ease for encompassing their difficulties.

*Traum durch die Daemmerung* is slowly and dreamily sung, and throughout evokes the "twilight blue of the evening" mood. This is a finer interpretation of this song than Enid Szanthe's recently issued. *Ich Schwebe*, not so well known, is a gay song in which an elated lover pours out his heart to us. In his excitement he tells how his spirit is no longer earthbound when he conjures up the remembrance of his beloved's tender farewell, and how his eyes were dazzled and his ears filled with melody as he now visualizes her. Mme. Schumann captures his rapture, particularly in the way she caresses the high phrases in the words *Engelschwingen*, *Scheidegruss*, *wonneschueren*, and *laechelnd*.

Robert Schumann's *Mondnacht* is an equally happy vehicle for the artist. She gets the effect of long-drawn phrases, not from a continuously beautiful *legato* (although she has that on occasion, as in the lines "*die Erde still gekusst*" and "*die Aehren woghten sacht*"), but by a succession of tones that suddenly light up and glow. These flashes, as the brightness on the word *Bluthenschimmer* the poised tenderness on *Felder*, and the clear, rare tone on *Lande* focus our attention on their delicacies, and yet, to use a rather strange simile, like the propelling flashes within a projectile, they seem to carry us unswervingly forward along the vocal line of the music. This is a type of vocalism peculiar to Mme. Schumann. Not since Julia Culp's lovely acoustic recording of this song have we had as fine an interpretation. The refinement in Karl Alwin's accompaniments and the fidelity in the recording enhance our enjoyment in the singer and her songs.

—A. P. D.



# In the Popular Vein

By HORACE VAN NORMAN

## BALLROOM DANCE

AAAA—*On a Little Bamboo Bridge, and How Could You?* Tommy Dorsey and his Orchestra. Victor 25513.

This is a practically perfect example of what can be accomplished, through smart treatment, with what is definitely Just One of Those Tunes. *On a Little Bamboo Bridge* is fully as bad a number as the title gives you every right to expect it will be, and yet Dorsey's performance has so much "go" to it that you're almost willing to concede it a place among the regrettably few smart tunes of current vintage. Dorsey, we are very happy to say, gets better and better as time goes on, and is finally beginning to justify the high expectations held for him when he first organized his own unit.

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AAAA—*I've Got My Love to Keep Me Warm, and Slumming on Park Avenue*, from *On the Avenue*. Red Norvo and his Orchestra. Brunswick 7813.

These recordings, aside from Norvo's always brilliant work on the xylophone, are particularly brightened by the grand vocals of Mildred Bailey, who, even though she annihilates the melodic line, really makes you feel alright about it with her heart-warming warbling. We should say that Bailey's stock is higher now than it has been in five years or so, and her work on this disc affords ample justification for it. What she can do to pump life into a pallid number is beyond belief, and when the numbers are first-rate, as they are here, the results are notable indeed.

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AAA—*To Love You and To Lose You, and Long As You Got Your Health*. Ray Noble and his Orchestra. Victor 25504.

*Long As You Got Your Health*, from *The Show Is On*, is smart stuff, smartly done by Noble and his efficient crew, while *To Love You and To Lose You*, with music by no less a figure than Kurt Weill and a new "commercial" lyric by Eddie Heyman, is about all that's been salvaged from the ill-fated *Johnnie Johnson*. The latter has a seriously unoriginal theme, but the development is characteristically distinctive and the number might have possibilities for a fair degree of popularity, but Noble's treatment of it is strangely ineffective.

\* \* \* \*

AAA—*Boo-Hoo, and If My Heart Could Only Talk*. Russ Morgan and his Orchestra. Brunswick 7814.

More Russ Morgan confectionery, and, unless all indications are wrong, the public is eating it up, smacking its lips and crying for more. Well, aside from the tricks, which may prove annoying, there

exists a basis of good, solid musicianship in his work that is always more or less satisfying, even in such so-so tunes as these.

\* \* \* \*

AAA—*Smoke Dreams, and A Thousand Dreams of You*. Red Norvo and his Orchestra. Brunswick 7815.

In a very unobtrusive way, the introduction to *Smoke Dreams* is one of the most daring things ever attempted on a dance record. The only place you ever heard harmonies like that before (aside from a few of Reginald Foresythe's more esoteric efforts) was in Norvo's xylophone solo, *Dance of the Octopus*, so we may conclude that it's Norvo's own arrangement. Anyhow, it's supremely effective here and suggests that Norvo has a few tricks up his sleeve that might prove mighty interesting if brought to light. Once more, also, Bailey's vocal is a tower of strength.

\* \* \* \*

AA—*Crazy Rhythm, and I Never Knew*. Yasha Bunchuk and his Swing Symphony Orchestra. Brunswick 7801.

Elaborate symphonic-swing arrangements which would never have been dreamed of if a man named Kostelanetz hadn't appeared on the scene a couple of years ago. Not entirely without merit, they are so patently an imitation of Kostelanetz and, of course, so inferior to him, that they can't be judged fairly for what they are: moderately skillful full-orchestra jobs.

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A—*My Sugar Takes Me With a Grain of Salt, and Gazing at a Blazing Fire*. Jan Garber and his Orchestra. Brunswick 7820.

In case anyone is interested, this is your correspondent's notion of a thoroughly, hopelessly bad record, and including it here for that very reason may possibly give more point to occasionally laudatory comments made about other more fortunate discs. If you know what a person *doesn't* like, it may make it a little easier to understand just why he likes what he *does* like. And this record by him who is familiarly known as The Idol of the Air Lanes virtually runs the gamut of things we don't like in a record.

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## HOT JAZZ

Q AAAA—*Limehouse Blues, and After You've Gone*. Quintette of the Hot Club of France. Victor 25511.

This is practically a duplication of two of the sides issued on a competing disc by the same group and bearing the sponsorship of the Hot Club of France. They are chiefly distinctive as a revelation of the really prodigious talent displayed by Stephane Grapelly, violinist, and Django Reinhardt, guitar-



ist. Grapelly, whose work is more than a little reminiscent of Eddie South and, less strikingly, of Stuff Smith, is by all means a superb fiddler, but he is scarcely superior to a baker's dozen of fiddlers that could be mustered up in jig time here in America. The veritable *raison d'être* for this and other discs emanating from the same source must surely be the extraordinary guitar playing of Django Rheinhardt, which is reminiscent of no one in the world and far in advance of anything heretofore attempted on the guitar, at least on records. There is, in fact, only one guitarist in the world to my knowledge who could come near to duplicating Rheinhardt's performance on these discs, and he is a comparatively obscure New York musician who needs only restraint and poise to make him the foremost swing guitarist in the world. But, in the meantime, Rheinhardt's work is miles ahead of any of his much-touted American contemporaries, and involves the use of a technique utterly unlike anyone's in this country (with the lone exception duly noted already).

\* \* \* \*

AAA—Original Dixieland One-Step, and Barnyard Blues. Original Dixieland Five. Victor 25502.

After several highly unsuccessful discs, The Original Dixieland Five have triumphantly vindicated themselves by shedding the extra men and making a recording which is not a poor attempt to imitate Goodman or any other current figure but actually a re-creation of the Original Dixieland style of playing. Those avid connoisseurs of swing who discuss the early years of jazz so learnedly without having experienced them in the flesh, so to speak, may be a little astonished at what they hear on this disc, but historically accurate, for better or worse, it certainly is. If you want to know what the jazz of twenty years ago *really* sounded like, you have it here, and to perfection. To us it is a thoroughly delightful trip back through the years and affords a grand opportunity, in conjunction with any current recording, of noting just how completely different our own "swing" is from the pioneer jazz.

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## SWING MUSIC NOTES

By ENZO ARCHETTI

The recent influenza epidemic which hit New York and vicinity took some of the wind out of this column's sails. Consequently, when press time came around, it found this writer flat on his back in bed with a clinical thermometer stuck in his mouth — and the February Notes went by the board. But influenza or no influenza, swing music kept right on going and news about it continued, unperturbed, to pile up. Now all is well again and lost time must be regained.

Recently, a most extraordinary document came to our notice. It is circulated by an organization called a "hot record exchange" which, we understand, was created to meet a definite demand among hot record fans — a demand for the hot records of the so-called "golden age" of hot music when swing was played because it pleased and stimulated and not because it was good business. Hot jazz had its "golden age" just as opera had it and the similarity is complete now that both have a following which, apparently, is willing to pay almost any price for a rare disc.

This "hot record exchange" states its policy quite baldly in the preface to a mimeographed catalog of about a dozen pages: "In our first catalog we stated that our prices were based on rarity alone. Nevertheless musical value has entered into the majority of our transactions. We will still endeavor to let musical tastes play as small a part as possible. Again it must be a question of demand and supply." And then follow many pages of discs which will make a hot fan bite his nails with envy — and turn his hair grey when he sees the prices that accompany them. For instance, under Louis Armstrong are listed several Okeh discs, relics of the mid-twenties like *Gut Bucket Blues*, *Yes, I'm in the Barrel*, *You're Next*, *Oriental Strut*, *My Heart*, and *Cornet Chop Suey*, at a cool \$25 each! A little farther on in the catalog we come to the Chicago Looper's *Three Blind Mice*, on Perfect, also going for a mere \$25! The Chicago Loopers were a recording orchestra assembled by Frankie Trumbauer and Bix Beiderbecke. But these are by no means the highest priced. Under Earl Hines we see his almost mythical Q. R. S. piano solo recordings of *Monday Date*, *Chicago High Life*, *Panther Rag*, *Just Too Soon*, *Blues in Thirds*, and *Off Times Blues* listed at \$35. each!

Here and there, however, we see hints of modesty. For instance, Bud Freeman's *Crazeology* and *Can't Help Lovin' That Man* (Okeh) is selling for only \$15. Ellington's Champion recording of *Wanna Go Back Again Blues* is demanding \$5. There are several \$5 items scattered here and there throughout the catalog, notably under Louis Armstrong, the New Orleans Rhythm Kings, Husk O'Hara's Super Orchestra, King Oliver's Jazz Band, Clarence Williams Blue Five (with Louis Armstrong), the Wolverine (with Bix Beiderbecke) and Pine Top Smith.

Personally, I hope that there are not many customers for such demands. Even in hot music, there should be a limit to fanaticism.

The Saturday Night Swing Club, which goes on the air over WABC, is now America's No. 1 Swing Club. Its membership is not a mere handful of local enthusiasts but a nation-wide group which looks forward eagerly to this Saturday night spot. And no wonder! It offers some of the finest swing talent available today in addition to Bunny Berigan's fine trumpeting. During January and February such artists as Claude Hopkins, Fats Waller, Caspar Reardon, Hazel Scott, Doris Kerr, the Three Symphonettes, Joe Haymes, Chick Webb, and Ella Fitzgerald were presented.

Every once in a while the Swing Club introduces a new discovery for the approval of its listeners. Hazel Scott was one of its discoveries. She is a kind of female Fats Waller, without his good humor and wit, but with some of his style and technique. Chick Lindsey is by far its best discovery to date. A young negro of twenty, from Norfolk, Virginia, he displayed an amazing technique on the guitar, plus a powerful swing, and an original manner of presentation. Here is a swing musician definitely to be watched — and encouraged.

But the Swing Club's greatest contribution to swing since its inception are two compositions of Raymond Scott, the pianist of Bunny Berigan's Bunch, which are positively the screwiest and yet the most fascinating pieces of swing music we have heard in years. Raymond Scott, alias Harry Warnow, first came into prominence when his clever swing fugue *Swing, Swing, Mother-in-Law* was pres-



ented in the early broadcasts of the Swing Club. He has done it again with *Twilight in Turkey* and *Powerhouse*. The first piece is absolutely wacky but grand fun. It may not make sense but it does make plenty of rhythm — and every musician has a grand opportunity to let himself go. *Powerhouse* is a horse of a different color. Paul Douglas, the Swing Club's smooth-tongued announcer, dubbed it the *Monkey Wrench Stomp* but we feel this name is in a sense derogatory. It is not just another screwy swing tune. There is method in its madness. In its conception, it is comparable to Honegger's *Pacific 231* and in many ways superior to it. The idiom is different, of course, but like Honegger's work it suggests power and motion. A modern masterpiece, if there ever was one!

Incidentally, these numbers were played by the Raymond Scott Quintet during the broadcasts. The Quintet is composed of members from Bunny Berigan's Bunch. This group should record both these works. These compositions should not be allowed to be forgotten.

In addition to his activities with the Saturday Night Swing Club, Bunny Berigan has found the time to assemble an orchestra of his own. On February 3rd, he and his new band opened at The Meadowbrook, a club at Cedar Grove, New Jersey, which is fast becoming the swing center of New Jersey, and the band proved to be an instant success. It followed Tommy Dorsey into that spot, and, in spite of its newness, it filled the spot excellently. A band of ten players with a vocalist, their playing was surprisingly homogeneous for a group that had played together less than two weeks. Of course, there were rough spots here and there, on the opening night, which could have been attributed to poor acoustics, lack of rehearsals, conflicting styles of playing, etc. But these were, on the whole, minor defects. The band played with a terrific swing and the crowd which turned out to greet the band enjoyed the music. The surest sign that a swing band is good is when the dancers cease their dancing to gather around the bandstand to hear the players strut their stuff. That is what happened on the opening night at Meadowbrook.

From The Meadowbrook, Bunny Berigan's Band went on a series of one night stands. A commercially sponsored program on the air is also being negotiated. This is the first time in the history of radio that a newly organized band has succeeded in gaining a commercial on the air in such a short time.

The personnel of the band will be published next month.

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## RADIO NOTES

### CHASINS' MUSIC SERIES

The first of a new series of all-request programs was inaugurated by Abram Chasins during his Music Series on Saturday, February 27, at 12:00 Noon, EST, over the NBC-Red Network. In response to many requests, Chasins will build his programs. A survey has indicated that the greatest number of letters has come from students and teachers.

## "AMERICANA" CONCERT

"Americana," a new symphonic series directed by Freddie Rich and devoted to the works of American composers, had its premiere performance over the WABC-Columbia network on Saturday, February 13th, from 10:45 to 11:00 P. M., EST.

Movements from two outstanding American works, mostly in the popular genre, were featured on this program.

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## NBC HOME SYMPHONY

The second series of NBC Home Symphony programs will be concluded with the broadcast on Saturday, March 6, at 6:35 P. M., EST, over the NBC-Blue Network. The third series of ten participation programs will be inaugurated on Saturday, March 27. Music details for the March 6 program include the Overture to Mozart's *Les Petits Riens*, Handel's *Sarabande*, the gavotte from Gluck's *Paris and Helen* and the overture to *Stradella* by Flotow. The two intervening Home Symphony periods, on March 13 and 20, will be devoted to all-request programs.

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## MYRA HESS SOLOIST OF FORD HOUR

Compositions by Grieg, Chopin and Bach will be featured by the English pianist, Myra Hess, during her broadcast with the Ford Symphony Orchestra and Chorus conducted by Victor Kolar over the entire coast-to-coast WABC-Columbia network on Sunday, March 7, from 9:00 to 10:00 P. M., EST.

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## ARTHUR LOESSER WITH NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC

Arthur Loesser, American concert pianist, will be the guest artist with the New York Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra, directed by Artur Rodzinski, during the broadcast over the combined nationwide WABC-Columbia and Canadian networks on Sunday, March 7, from 3:00 to 5:00 P. M., EST.

Loesser will feature Ernst von Dohnanyi's *Variations on a Nursery Air for Orchestra and Piano*, broadcast for the first time by the Philharmonic-Symphony Society. The Variations by Dohnanyi have as their theme the French folk song, *Ah vous dirai je maman*, a melody which Mozart himself used in a series of piano variations in 1778. The Dohnanyi work consists of eleven variations and a finale fugato, with elaborate developments and witty jugglings.

\* \* \* \*

## TO FEATURE "IOLANTHE"

Columbia's "Music of the Theatre," featuring favorite selections from outstanding operettas and musical comedies, will present important excerpts from Gilbert and Sullivan's classic, "Iolanthe" during the broadcast over the nationwide WABC-Columbia network on Sunday, March 7, from 2:00 to 2:45 P.M., EST.

The singers include Margaret Daum, soprano; Ruth Carhart, contralto; William Perry, tenor; Hubert Hendrie and Russell Dorr, baritones, and the male chorus and concert orchestra directed by Howard Barlow.



## CBS JAMSTERS GO TO TOWN IN "HOME MADE RHYTHM" SERIES

The radio audience has its chance to listen in on an authentic "jam session" when "Home Made Rhythm," a new weekly series on the WABC-Columbia network is broadcast each Wednesday from 9:00 to 9:30 A.M., EST.

"Jam sessions — where a group of musicians gather to 'swing it' for their own amusement — have till now been concentrated in so few private meeting-places that you could count them on the fingers of one hand," according to Paul Munroe, producer of the program.

To the theme of "Twilight in Turkey," one of the ear-tickling compositions of their pianist, Ray Scott, the Toytown Quintet and Leith Stevens' Instrumentalists swing into the series of Wednesday jam sessions.

"And a jam session," explained Munroe, "is where six or more musicians meet informally to play for their own pleasure.

"Sheet music is banned. It's not needed anyway for these are good musicians — only good musicians can jam, for jam is creation. One of them starts to play, picking out a familiar melody. Another follows suit, and still another. Gradually all are following the lead of the first instrument. The original melody melts into delightful confusion — a perfect combination of harmony and rhythm; the leading instrument gives way to another, improvising brilliantly, thrillingly. Soon harmony and rhythm reach the heights — a mad, exciting, provoking sound of swing."

Johnny Williams will do a bit of neat swing-drumming; Dave Wade will trumpet in traditional manner; Dave Harris will toot a tenor sax; while Pete Permiglio and Lou Shoubee will hold down the clarinet and string bass end, respectively. These members of the quintet will work from the compositions of Ray Scott, noted for the unusual melodies he composes and tags with such goofy handles as "*Dinner Music for a Pack of Hungry Animals*," "*Yesterday's Ice Cubes Are Water Today*," and "*Consternation Among a Band of Indians Upon Meeting Up with a Machine Gun*."

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## 14th ANNUAL NATIONAL MUSIC WEEK

For the fourteenth consecutive year the first Sunday of May will usher in National Music Week.

In keeping with its annual purpose to concentrate its activities on developing some phase of American music culture, National Music Week for 1937, May 2 to 8, will be dedicated to a cause indicated by this year's slogan: "Foster Local Music Talent."

In spite of the great development of musical talent among young people during the past few years through high school bands, orchestras and glee clubs, a survey by the National Music Week Committee has revealed that most amateur musicians fail to continue their musical education because of the few opportunities offered them in their local communities to make use of their talents.

"Musical groups composed of adolescents have become an important feature in the social life of many cities and towns, and many of them have won praise from famous musicians," said David Sarnoff, chairman of the National Music Week Committee and president of the Radio Corporation of America, in discussing plans yesterday for the Committee's annual music festival in May. "Yet the graduates from these groups, in many cases, have not followed up their good start by integrating themselves in the musical life of the community. Often the fault

is not theirs — there simply isn't any place for them to go. Through this year's Music Week program, the Committee hopes to inspire communities which abound in talent to encourage building musicians by offering them a definite program of musical activities in which they may take part."

—P. H. R.

## SIX BACH CONCERTS

Six programs comprising many of the greatest works of Johann Sebastian Bach and featuring the famous Westminster Choir under the direction of Dr. John Finley Williamson will be presented by the Columbia Broadcasting System in weekly broadcasts during March and April. Carl Weinrich, F. A. G. O., one of the foremost Bach organists of the world, will play throughout the series.

The Bach programs will be inaugurated over the nationwide WABC-Columbia network on Thursday, March 25, from 4:00 to 4:30 P. M., EST, and will be heard weekly thereafter at the same time, with the final program broadcast on April 29.

## CHICAGO SYMPHONIC HOUR

The Chicago Symphonic Hour, a new sixty-minute program featuring a total of 125 choristers, musicians and soloists under the direction of Roy Shield, NBC Central Division music director, will be inaugurated Friday, March 5, over the NBC-Blue Network at 11:00 P. M., EST.

Vivian Della Chiesa, Chicago opera star; Edward Davies, famous NBC baritone, and Charles Sears, popular radio tenor, will be vocal soloists of the new series. Noble Cain's Chicago A Capella Choir, the Mundelein College Verse Speaking Choir and a symphonic orchestra will be heard on each program. Symphonic and operatic numbers will be blended with lighter music and an authority on music will be heard in the role of commentator.

## GRACE MOORE IN "MADAME BUTTERFLY"

Grace Moore, soprano of grand opera and screen, will sing in a special adaptation of Puccini's *Madame Butterfly* during the "Radio Theater" broadcast over the WABC-Columbia network Monday, March 8th, from 9:00 to 10:00 P. M., EST.

## CURTIS INSTITUTE OF MUSIC

The Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia will present Annette Elkanova, pianist, and Rafael Druian, violinist, in a concert broadcast over the nation-wide WABC-Columbia network on Wednesday, March 10, from 4:00 to 4:45 P. M., EST.

## AMERICAN SCHOOL OF THE AIR

Music written by men who won their greatest fame as poets and authors will be played during a music lesson by the "American School of the Air" over the WABC-Columbia network Tuesday, March 9, from 2:15 to 2:45 P. M., EST. The program includes several songs by Francois Villon; a Madrigal by John Milton, Sr.; Thomas Campion's *Masque Music* and two songs by Samuel Pepys entitled "*Beauty Retires*" and "*To Be or Not to Be*."

The simple melodies of Villon completely capture the atmosphere of the times when this vagabond poet lived. Campion was not only a skilled poet and doctor but also one of the finest Elizabethan composers. Pepys found time not only to write his enormous diary and to carry out his duties as a government official but also to compose a large number of songs.



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